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2010-2012“

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Anna Ilin

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Doz. Markian Prokopovych, PhD

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Verfasserin /Author

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Acknowledgments

In autumn and winter 2009 I spent a semester in Budapest, working as an intern for the Goethe-Institute and I noticed a level of disenchantment with politics unknown to me before. At the same time I saw a vibrant subcultural youth scene emerging and got to know many intelligent and thoughtful people who were concerned with the changes occurring in their country.

I left shortly before the upcoming elections in April 2010, but already during the preceding months they were thoroughly discussed. Many of my friends and acquaintances told me they would vote for Fidesz, not out of conviction but because they saw no alternatives, since the socialist party MSZP had become unelectable for them due to a series of scandals they were involved in. Now, talking to them two years later, they are even more frustrated and disappointed by the current government than they were with the previous ones.

When I first heard about the emergence of the extra-parliamentary opposition groups, their various and manifold attempts to mobilize people and to really try to change things, I was relieved that in the end the Hungarian public will not allow the government to pass them over.

At the same I wondered whether the developments in Hungary would also concern people in other countries, at least within the European Union. After all, Hungary is not an isolated island but part of European society. Moreover, especially recently, it is not uncommon for protest movements to cross national borders. But although Hungarian politics were covered regularly in the German and English papers, in the end no wider transnational alliance was constructed. This sparked a curiosity to orient my research towards understanding how the people organizing the extra-parliamentary opposition fit within the Hungarian political and cultural context.

There are many people who in one way or the other contributed to this thesis. First and foremost I am indebted to the activist and interview partners I had, as they offered me their time without hesitation.

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Abstract Englisch

Transnational social movement studies emerged as a new sub-field in the 1990s and as a reaction to increasing cross-border mobilization efforts by activists of different groups. Among the most prominent examples for transnational social movements are the Arab Spring, the Zapatistas and the Occupy Wall Street movement. However, it is not clear when transnationalization of protests actually occur. I take the Hungarian anti-government mobilization that took place between spring 2010 and autumn 2012 as my case study. Even though the preconditions suggested by the literature on transnational social movements in this case were largely met, transnationalization did not take place. By analyzing the movement's inability to mobilize on a transnational scale, I want to uncover the factors that both restrict and enable the transnationalization of social movements. I will posit that in Hungary, although individual activists are in fact inclined to reach out for international support, they are restricted by the socio-political context in which they are operating.

Abstract – Deutsch

Die Transnational Social Movement Studies bilden seit den 90er Jahren ein neues Subfeld der Social Movement Studies. Sie entstanden unter anderem als Reaktion auf die wachsende Anzahl an grenzüberschreitenden sozialen Bewegungen, der Arabische Frühling, die Zapatisten und die Occupy Wallstreet Bewegung sind dafür prominente Beispiele. Wann es jedoch zu einer Transnationalisierung von Protest kommt, ist noch nicht abschließend geklärt. Als Fallbeispiel dient hier die Mobilisierung gegen die ungarische Regierung zwischen Frühjahr 2010 und Herbst 2012. In dem Fall kam es, obwohl die von der Literatur angeführten Vorraussetzungen einer Transnationalisierung von Protesten weitestgehend gegeben waren, zu keiner grenzüberschreitenden Bewegung. Das übergestellter Ziel der Arbeit ist anhand des Fallbeispiels Ungarn mehr darüber heraus zu finden welche Faktoren

förderlich, bzw. Hinderlich für die Transnationalisierung von Protesten sind. Meine Hypothese ist, dass in Ungarn, obwohl die einzelnen Aktivisten durchaus nach internationalen Partnern und Aufmerksamkeit streben, aber durch den nationalen sozio-kulturellen Kontext daran gehindert werden diese zu erreichen.

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List of Abbreviations

EU	European Union
EUD	Europa Union Deutschland
Fidesz	Fiatal Demokrata Szövetség
FRDÉSZ	Fegyveres és Rendvédelmi Dolgozók Érdekvédelmi Szövetsége
GCS	Global Civil Society
IMF	International Monetary Fund
Jobbik	Jobbik Magyarországért Mozgalom
KDMP	Kereszténydemokrata Néppárt
LMP	Lehet Más a Politika
Milla	Egymillióan a magyar sajtószabadságért
MSZP	Magyar Szocialista Párt
MIÉP	Magyar Igazság és Élet Pártja
NATO	North Atlantic Treaty Organization
Szolidaritás	Szolidaritás Mozgalom
NMHH	Nemzeti Média- és Hírközlési Hatóság
SZDSZ	Szabad Demokrata Szövetség
WTO	World Trade Organization
4K!	Negyedik Köztársaság mozgalom párt

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Introduction

In the age of globalization, it is common for protest movements that begin on a national level to gain international recognition and support. Among the most prominent examples are the Arab Spring, the Zapatistas and the Occupy Wall Street movement, which became a symbol that spread across borders. In other cases, however, similar trends of transnationalization of protest activities have not occurred, even when the preconditions suggested by the literature on transnational social movements are met.

In Hungary, for example, turbulent times began when Victor Orbán's party, Fiatal Demokraták Szövetsége (Fidesz, eng. Hungarian Civic Union), won the elections in spring 2010 by a two-thirds majority and started to reform the country according to its ideology. In response, several groups that can be considered leftist started to mobilize against what they saw as an anti-democratic turn of the country, even managing in 2011 to organize the biggest civil protest since 1989.¹ Nonetheless, though some international symbols have been integrated into the Hungarian protests, they remain largely a national issue.

By analyzing the Hungarian anti-government mobilization and its inability to mobilize on a transnational scale, I want to uncover the factors that both restrict and enable the transnationalization of social movements. I will posit that in Hungary, although individual activists are in fact inclined to reach out for international support, they are restricted by the socio-political context in which they are operating.

The literature on civil society and social movements is vast, filling several libraries. A complete overview of the research already done is impossible. Instead, my aim is to review those theories that are important for my analysis. I link my research to the debate going on within social movement studies to analyze whether the traditional theories of social

¹ "Thongs protest Hungarian media law in Budapest; organizers say largest demo since 1989", *politics.hu*, March 15, 2011. <http://www.politics.hu/20110315/thongs-protest-hungarian-media-law-in-budapest-organizers-say-largest-demo-since-1989/>.

movements - like political process theory, resource mobilization theory and framing theory - or newer approaches specifically developed for the analysis of transnational social movements are more relevant for the analysis of the process of transnationalization.

The thesis is necessarily exploratory, as engaging in theory building would require more cases and a comparative research framework. Since mobilization efforts against Fidesz are still continuing² this is no more than a momentary evaluation of the events. I concentrate on the period between spring 2010 and autumn 2012, but will make reference to events taking place earlier or later where necessary.

The primary concern of my research is to study the activist groups that mobilize against Fidesz. I am not concerned with the opposition parties in parliament or with the developments within the Hungarian party system. The newly-founded party 4K! is an exception, as I am treating it like another activist group. The justification for this decision is based on the fact that the party started as a civil organization and only became a party in spring 2012 - having yet to gain representation in parliament. Again, the desirability of transnationalization is not what I am concerned with, but whether it happens or not and for which reasons.

I use a case study approach as described by David A. Snow and Danny Tran. It has a twofold aim: first, to give a detailed description of the current mobilization efforts in Hungary and its wider societal context; second, to relate it back to theoretical assumptions made by theories of transnational social movement theory.³ By closely analyzing three activist groups and different protest events that took place between December 2010 and October

² For example in October 2012 a new coalition of different activist groups and parties was forming. "Együtt 2014" - "Together 2014". Szolidaritás and Milla are both part of it, even though in summer 2012 it seemed very unlikely that they would ever work together. Facebook page: <http://www.facebook.com/egyutt2014>.

³ David A. Snow and Danny Tran, "The Case Study and the Study of Social Movements", in *Methods of Social Movement Research*, ed. Bert Klandermans and Suzanne Staggenborg (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2002), 146-172.

2012 I hope to contribute to a better understanding what influences the transnationalization of social movements.

I use qualitative data that I derive from several sources. Most importantly I use semi-structured interviews that are a well-recognized technique in social movement research. They provide first hand, unfiltered information from activists and give an idea about what kind of meaning activists assign to their actions and thus "bring human agency to the center of movement analysis."⁴

In Hungary I conducted six semi-structured interviews with people from three different activist groups:

- Egymillióan a magyar sajtószabadságért (Milla, eng. One Million for the Freedom of Press in Hungary)
- Szolidaritás Mozgalom (Szolidaritás, eng. Solidarity Movement)
- Negyedik Köztársaság mozgalom párt (4K!, eng. Fourth Republic!)

I chose these groups for different reasons. First, the activist groups I am concerned with basically developed after the elections of 2010 and as a direct reaction to the Fidesz government and its policies. Some of the groups and individuals had been active before but not to the same extent or in the same form. Second, as they have different goals, they represent different parts of the extra-parliamentary opposition movement in Hungary and thus can give an idea about the diversity of the movement as a whole. And third, because they are not 'issue-specific' but want far reaching changes that concern the Hungarian population as a whole. Thus they differ from other groups, for example the students movement that also grew rapidly since 2010 but focuses mainly on students' rights, or organizations for homeless people, that have also participated in many demonstrations.

⁴ Kathleen M. Blee and Verta Taylor, "Semi-Structured Interviewing in Social Movement Research," in *Methods of Social Movement Research*, ed. Bert Klandermans and Suzanne Staggenborg (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2002), 96.

The identity of all the people I interviewed is known to me and my supervisor but I decided not to mention the names of the Hungarian activists here. It is impossible for me to assess what kind of consequences it could have for them to be mentioned in my paper and I do not want to create a document that potentially has negative effects on their lives. Since I had two interviewees from each organization I will refer to them as the following: Milla1, Milla2, Szoli1, Szoli2, 4K!1, 4K!2.

The interviews took place in Budapest between June 24 and June 30, 2012, were conducted in Hungarian and lasted between 30 and 60 minutes. The place differed depending on the interviewee: four of the activists wanted to meet in coffee houses, whereas the two activists from Szolidaritás invited me to the Szolidaritás office. All of the interviewees have significant decision-making power and hold important functions within the movement.

I also interviewed Marco Schwarz, who works as an executive assistant in the German section of the Europa Union Deutschland (EUD, eng. Union of European Federalists) and had organized a protest event in front of the Hungarian Embassy in Berlin in March 2012.⁵ His perspective is important as it offers insights into the interplay between domestic and transnational groups.

Apart from this, I talked with András Bencsik, the editor in chief of the conservative/right-wing newspaper *Magyar Demokrata*. I met him in Budapest during the same week when I interviewed the activists, in the editorial office of the newspaper. Bencsik had organized the biggest pro-government rally in January 2012, called "Peace March". I used the interview with him to gather information about the opponents of the anti-government protesters and get a better idea about the overall discursive field of Hungary.

⁵ Markus Meckel, "Demonstration der Europa-Union angesichts der Gefährdung der Demokratie in Ungarn – 24. März 2012," March 21, 2012, <http://markus-meckel.de/2012/03/demonstration-der-europa-union-angesichts-der-gefahrung-der-demokratie-in-ungarn-24-maerz-2012/>.

However, I also used additional sources to analyze the level of transnationalization of the movement. I watched YouTube videos of the different demonstrations and looked at blog entries and newspaper reports to see what role international references play in the protests. I also included the homepages and Facebook pages of the groups in my analysis to find out whom they are primarily addressing.

Some criteria help to find out if a movement is transnational in scope. Protests can have a transnational dimension in many different ways. By combining ideas from different scholars I discern three broad categories to assess the transnational scope of a protest movement: use of the Internet, international alliances, and use of international symbols and foreign groups that fight for the same cause. These indicators will be used to analyze the Hungarian extra-parliamentary oppositional movement. The question could also be: to what extent do the Hungarian activist groups use a transnational framework? The first category I will consider is the Internet.

Online communication is central to social protests and the Internet, especially recently, played a crucial role in the dissemination of activists' goals and network building.⁶ Since the Internet grew rapidly in the 1990s a number of scholars have analyzed the political and social role of the Internet. Online activities can take many different forms and serve several causes: from networking, organizing events and informing the public, to actual online activism like drafting online petitions or organizing attacks on websites of the targeted institutions, as has happened during the mobilization against the World Trade Organization Ministerial Conference of 1999 in Seattle. "The Internet has indeed not only supported traditional offline social movement actions such as the classical street demonstrations and made them more transnational, but is also used to set up new forms of

⁶ Peter van Aelst and Stefaan Walgrave, "New Media, new Movements? the role of the Internet in shaping the 'anti-globalization' movement," *Information, Communication & Society* 5, no. 4 (2002): pp. 463-493, accessed January 11, 2013 <http://webhost.ua.ac.be/m2p/publications/1222460371.pdf>.

online protest activities and to create online modes of existing offline protest actions."⁷

Undoubtedly online activities have a strong potential to give protest events a transnational dimension. "Political action is made easier, faster and more universal by the developing technologies."⁸ The Zapatista movement is a good example of how the use of the Internet as a global communication network has led to international attention and success.

Started as a local rebellion, struggling for more rights and autonomy for the indigenous people of Chiapas in the rainforest of southern Mexico, their cause rapidly gained momentum thanks to a vast growing, global network of support that successfully linked the local Zapatista rebellion with many other local and international struggles against neoliberal globalization. The internet was decisive to the global diffusion of protest and solidarity.⁹

The second categories, international alliances, are one of the most central aspects to transnationalize a movement. Margret Keck and Kathryn Sikkink talk about Transnational Activist Networks as the carriers of transnational protests. They are defined as "[r]elevant actors working internationally on an issue, who are bound together by shared values, a common discourse, and dense exchanges of information and services."¹⁰ The Global Justice Movement, the environmental movement, the global women or the world wide AIDS movement all consist of groups of people from diverse countries who work towards similar goals.

In this case, however, I want to define transnational alliances more broadly. I think that a transnational alliance can also be applied to activists groups that have their own

⁷ Jeroen van Laer and Peter van Aelst, "Internet and Social Movement Action Repertoires," *Information, Communication & Society* 13, no. 8, (2010): 1147, doi: 10.1080/13691181003628307.

⁸ Peter van Aelst and Stefaan Walgrave, "New Media, new Movements? the role of the Internet in shaping the 'anti-globalization' movement," *Information, Communication & Society* 5, no. 4 (2002): 466, accessed January 11, 2013, <http://webhost.ua.ac.be/m2p/publications/1222460371.pdf>.

⁹ Laer and Aelst, "Internet and Social Movement Action Repertoires," 1147.

¹⁰ Margret E. Keck and Kathryn Sikkink, *Activists Beyond Borders: Advocacy Networks in International Politics* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1998), 2.

locally based goals as long as there is still some level of transnational cooperation or coordination. Following, for example, the Serbian anti-Milošević movement Otpor, a transnational alliance could also mean that groups from one country provide training, knowledge and skills to groups in other countries. Tina Rosenberg explains how Egyptians activists, back then still not very experienced in organizing mass protest, asked former Otpor activist for advice. "In the summer of 2009, Mohamed Adel, a 20-year-old blogger and April 6 activist, went to Belgrade, Serbia."¹¹ There, former Otpor colleagues established the Center for Nonviolent Action and Strategies and taught Adel about new tactics of resistance that he later used in Egypt. There can also be alliances between activist groups and institutions like the European Union international courts or research institutes, though they follow a different logic than cooperation between activist groups. Often, though, the power dynamic between the institution and the activists is more imbalanced. However, asking international institutions for help, as the Syrian opposition movement unsuccessfully attempted with the United Nations, is, in my understanding, also a form of alliance building.¹²

The third category is campaign design. I specifically want to look at transnational framing efforts. Sidney Tarrow in his analysis talks about "global framing" but I think "transnational frame" is a more moderate variant of this concept. I think that there are different levels one could examine. One is the level of the organizers of the protest: how they are specifically designing their campaign and trying to convince the public. Another category is the total mass of people participating in a protest acting relatively independently from the organizational body. Sometimes the line between the protest "leaders" and the

¹¹ Tina Rosenberg, Revolution U: What Egypt learned from students who overthrew Milosevic. *Foreign Policy*, February 16, 2011, http://www.foreignpolicy.com/articles/2011/02/16/revolution_u?page=full.

¹² Khaled Yacoub Oweis, "Syrian Activists appeal for international help," *Reuters*, September 8, 2011, <http://www.reuters.com/article/2011/09/08/us-syria-activists-appeal-idUSTRE78744L20110908>.

mass of people is hard to draw as many organizations have a loose network character.

Nonetheless, for analytical purposes this distinction might be useful.

The thesis will be structured as follows: first, a theoretical background will be given on the nature of the debate within transnational social movement theory. This will be followed by a discussion of the Hungarian political context. Within this section, I focus on the major changes the Fidesz government implemented and the issues that caused the activist groups to react. Moreover, I want to show how Fidesz is trying to occupy spaces like the cultural scene and the media with its own ideology. This serves to better understand the discursive field in which the movements have to situate themselves. Next, the activist groups will be introduced. After assessing their level of transnationalization by looking at their use of the Internet, their strategic alliances and their campaign design, I want to suggest possible explanations as to why the protests remain largely within a national frame of reference.

1. Theoretical Framework - Transnationalization of Social Movements

I am situating my research in the field of social movement studies. In its broadest definition social movements can be described as "a sustained, organized public effort making collective claims on target audiences."¹³ Transnational social movement then consequently would be centered on "conflicts that link transnational activists to one another, to states, and to transnational institution."¹⁴

One must keep in mind that though the term social movement suggests unity, this does not limit the analysis to one single group. In fact, several activist groups can be

¹³ Tilly in: Sidney Tarrow, *The New Transnational Activism* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2005), 6.

¹⁴ Tarrow. *The New Transnational Activism* , p. 25.

involved in any kind of social movement and thus the term actually can refer to a diversity of actors.

Traditionally, social movement studies have mostly dealt with local or domestic movements.¹⁵ Only recently have transnational social movement studies emerged as a new sub-field. However, these 'classical' approaches are far from outdated and are still worthy of consideration. One of the main questions in the field of social movement studies is whether a new type of theory is necessary to analyze cross-border protests. Therefore, before turning to the question of transnationalization, I want to introduce three theories and contextualize them so far as I consider them relevant for my work: the resource mobilization theory, the political opportunity framework and the framing perspective.

1.1 Classical Approaches

To comprehensively analyze the emergence of social movements, three perspectives are often combined. Resource mobilization theory draws attention to the material and personal resources of movements and was first developed by John McCarthy and Mayer Zald.¹⁶ Moreover, it emphasizes the organizational capabilities of social movement organizations.

However, as it was criticized for leaving out the context in which the mobilization takes place, political opportunity structures became an important complementary perspective. In their seminal book *Dynamics of Contention*¹⁷, Doug McAdam, Sidney Tarrow and Charles Tilly developed for the first time a comprehensive theory about how political

¹⁵ Marco Giugni, Marko Bandler and Nina Eggert, "The Global Justice Movement: How Far Does the Classic Social Movement Agenda Go in Explaining Transnational Contention?," *Civil Society and Social Movements Programme Paper* 24 (June 2006):2, accessed January 8, 2013 [http://www.unrisd.org/unrisd/website/document.nsf/d2a23ad2d50cb2a280256eb300385855/8647c951dcb7e800c12571d1002d7be4/\\$FILE/Giugni.pdf](http://www.unrisd.org/unrisd/website/document.nsf/d2a23ad2d50cb2a280256eb300385855/8647c951dcb7e800c12571d1002d7be4/$FILE/Giugni.pdf).

¹⁶ John D. McCarthy and Mayer N. Zald, "Resource Mobilization and Social Movements: a partial theory," *American Journal of Sociology* 82, no. 6 (1977): 1212-1242, accessed June 5, 2012, <http://links.jstor.org/sici?sici=002-9602%28197705%2982%3A6%3C1212%3ARMASMA%3E2.0.CO%3B2-%23>.

opportunities and threats considerably shape movement outcomes. For political process theory the key is to look at the shifts in the institutional framework to explain how movements operate. "Contentious politics"¹⁸ varies and changes in close connection with shifts of political power. Regimes have several qualities that influence the type of protest that will occur. These features they call political opportunity structure. It entails:

1. The multiplicity of independent centers of power within it, 2. Its openness to new actors, 3. The instability of the current political alignments, 4. The availability of influential allies or supporters for challengers, 5. The extent to which the regime represses or facilitates collective claim making, 6. Decisive changes in items.¹⁹

Thus political opportunity theory mainly looks at the context in which a given movement develops. Threats are basically treated as the other side of opportunities. The financial crisis, for example, is clearly a threat to many people's existence. At the same time it was an opportunity for groups like Occupy Wall Street to emerge and attract more followers.

Whether or not a political opportunity will be seized upon and in what way depends on the perception of different actors. Thus to complement the other two approaches to the study of social movements the concept of "collective action frames" has been introduced.

In order for a movement to be successful, that is, to appeal to a broader public, it has to "align" their frame in an "interactional and ongoing" process.²⁰ They also refer to this as a "meaning making", something that has been neglected by other social movement theories.²¹

According to Benford and Snow there are four primary frame alignment processes: frame

¹⁸ It has to be noted that Tarrow, Tilly and their deceased colleague McAdam have concentrated on contentious politics in general and of which social movements are only one fraction.

¹⁹ Sidney Tarrow and Charles Tilly, *Contentious Politics* (Boulder: Paradigm Publishers, 2007), 57.

²⁰ David A. Snow, E. Burke Rochford, Jr., Steven K. Worden and Robert D. Benford, "Frame Alignment Processes, Micromobilization, and Movement Participation," *American Sociological Review* 51, no.4 (1986): p. 464, accessed June 12, 2012, <http://www.jstor.org/stable/2095581>.

²¹ Robert D. Benford and David A. Snow, "Ideology, Frame Resonance and Participant Mobilization," *International Social Movement Research* 1, no.1 (1988): p. 198, <http://www.mendeley.com/catalog/ideology-frame-resonance-participant-mobilization-1/>.

bridging, frame amplification, frame extension, and frame transformation.

Frame bridging basically means any strategy of the movement that contributes to its publicity and makes others aware of their agenda. This can include flyers, posters, mailing lists or the use of new technologies²². Whereas frame bridging concentrates more on the technical, organizational aspects of a movement's tactics, the other three frame alignment processes are about the quality of the movement's strategy.

Frame amplifications has two variations: amplification of a value (for example: liberty, equality, freedom) or a belief (for example: peace is good, family is important). "Value amplification refers to the identification, idealization, and elevation of one or more values presumed basic to prospective constituents but which have not inspired collective action for any number of reasons."²³

Frame extension on the other hand is used to attract individuals to whom the "primary framework" of the movement is not immediately appealing. To still reach out to them movement members might need to offer another "hook". This can happen by broadening their agenda and connecting it with other issues that are relevant to already established groups. Snow et al. give the example of the Austin Peace and Justice Coalition, that after realizing that their campaigns for nuclear disarmament did not appeal to racial minorities, included social justice in their agenda.²⁴

The fourth and last type of frame alignment is frame transformation. This is the most radical one and according to the authors used if the movement wants to promote ideas that so far have not gained acceptance in society. "Keying" is another term by Goffmann which

²² David A. Snow, E. Burke Rochford, Jr., Steven K. Worden and Robert D. Benford, "Frame Alignment Processes, Micromobilization, and Movement Participation," 467-468.

²³ David A. Snow, E. Burke Rochford, Jr., Steven K. Worden and Robert D. Benford, "Frame Alignment Processes, Micromobilization, and Movement Participation," 469.

²⁴ David A. Snow, E. Burke Rochford, Jr., Steven K. Worden and Robert D. Benford, "Frame Alignment Processes, Micromobilization, and Movement Participation," 473.

they borrow to explain what frame transformation entails. "[K]eying 'predefines activities, events, and biographies that are already meaningful from the standpoint of some primary framework, in terms of- another framework."²⁵ It has to be noted that often a combination of different alignment strategies is used and they also overlap. Thus these four alignment processes are more like analytic ideal types that in reality are intertwined.

One of the questions that still bothers researchers of social movements is the problem of causal relationships. Say we have a certain political and societal circumstances, thus a certain political opportunity structure. On what does it depend whether or not opportunities will be realized and effective tactics used? "Structures are somehow assumed to shape actors' interests and identities, and to determine their tactical repertoires, but how structures achieve these formidable feats and what role remains for agency and choice remains obscure."²⁶

The traditional approach to explain the mechanism between certain given circumstances and activities that take place is the rational-choice argument. Actors, after carefully weighing pros and cons of a certain action decide what to do. However, responses are usually very diverse and a number of contentious activities will take place. At other times opportunities will not be realized at all and chances for attracting popular support will be missed. One could of course explain this by asserting that the unsuccessful actors simply acted irrationally. However, this is not a satisfactory explanation. A convincing alternative of how the framing perspective and political opportunity theory can be brought together is the idea of "discursive opportunities."²⁷

²⁵ David A. Snow, E. Burke Rochford, Jr., Steven K. Worden and Robert D. Benford, "Frame Alignment Processes, Micromobilization, and Movement Participation," 474.

²⁶ Ruud Koopmans, "The Missing Link between Structure and Agency: Outline of an evolutionary approach to social movements," *Mobilization: An International Journal* 10, no.1 (2005): p. 20, accessed January 3, 2013, <http://www.mobilization.sdsu.edu/volumes/Volume10.html>.

²⁷ Holly J. McCammon, Harmony D. Newman, Courtney Sanders Muse and Teresa M. Terrell, "Movement Framing

According to the framing perspective, in order to reach their audience, frames have to be culturally resonant. This resonance depends on three characteristics. Frames should be empirically credible, that is, there should be some evidence out there that supports the main assumptions of the diagnosis and prognosis: they should have "experiential commensurability", that is, people should be able to find their own experiences reflected in the frame in order to identify with it;²⁸ lastly, there is "narrative fidelity", which means that a frame should have a connection with the myths, stories and cultural narratives that are already present in society.²⁹

However, the idea that movements will definitely try to achieve cultural resonance has been justly criticized for two reasons. First of all, it is not self-evident and empirically not tenable that movements will always try to achieve resonance. Rather, some groups consciously choose radical frames to challenge hegemonic meanings and identities or to achieve more long-term goals or because their aim is to achieve a change of perception. Secondly, and related to that, is the criticism that the focus on cultural resonance ignores the existing hierarchical relations between frames. "Because this view of framing removes it from an analysis of power relations, discourse does not appear to express or institutionalize inequalities."³⁰

and Discursive Opportunity Structures: The Political Successes of the U.S. Women's Jury Movements," *American Sociological Review* 72, no. 5 (October 2007): pp. 725-749, accessed January 6, 2013 <http://www.jstor.org/stable/25472489>.

²⁸ Robert D. Benford and David A. Snow, "Ideology, Frame Resonance and Participant Mobilization," *International Social Movement Research* 1, no.1 (1988): 208-209, accessed May 29, 2012, <http://www.mendeley.com/catalog/ideology-frame-resonance-participant-mobilization-1/>.

²⁹ Benford and Snow, "Ideology, Frame Resonance and Participant Mobilization," 210.

³⁰ Myra Marx Ferree, "Resonance and Radicalism: Feminist Framing in the Abortion Debates of the United States and Germany," *American Journal of Sociology* 109, no.2 (2003): 307, accessed January 3, 2012, http://www.google.de/url?sa=t&rcct=j&q=&esrc=s&source=web&cd=1&ved=0CDIQFjAA&url=http%3A%2F%2Fciteseerx.ist.psu.edu%2Fviewdoc%2Fdownload%3Fdoi%3D10.1.1.200.5504%26rep%3Drep1%26type%3Dpdf&ei=Z_BVUY_LK4TJsgaVxYHYAg&usq=AFQjCNEUkqPsCQ_QSCetDMR-X4C2RaBBPQ&sig2=FU5sVtEER40wq0ATgHApew&xbvm=bv.44442042,d.Yms&cad=rja. See also: Holly J. McCammon, Courtney Senders Muse, Harmony D. Newmann and Teresa M. Terrel, "Movement Framing and Discursive Opportunity Structures: The Political Success of the U.S. Women's Jury Movements," *American*

It is here where political process theory is useful. It is more sensitive to the power-relations and institutionalized discourses that, depending on the context, will mark the line between hegemonic and marginalized articulations. It also already recognizes the importance of the relative stability of a system concerning mobilization efforts. However, it does not afford much attention to the actual quality of the statements and the actors' perception.³¹

The concept of discursive opportunities brings these two ideas together. It offers a more dynamic perspective that acknowledges the wider context in which a mobilization takes place but does not deny the creative abilities of activists. "In discourse-theoretical terms, although the existing discursive horizon limits the 'discursive availability', social movements are not, in a strict sense *determined* by it [emphasis in the original]."³²

Another factor was suggested by Ruud Koopmanns. He developed an evolutionary approach to link structure and agency together. He suggests that movements more or less organically develop in a certain environment. If structures change and new opportunities open up, the movement in a process of try and error will find out what kind of new strategy will suit best. "[A]ctivists adapt their strategies to available opportunity structures by way of an iterative trial-and-error process."³³ With this he can also explain why sometimes opportunities are missed. The factor that decides upon this is time. As time is needed to adjust to new conditions sometimes, the window of opportunity will already be closed again until movements start to adapt."

As we can see there are various strands of social movement studies and they have

Sociological Review 72, no.5 (2007): 725-749, accessed January 3, 2013, <http://www.jstor.org/stable/25472489>.

³¹ Shu-Fen Lin, "'Democratization' in Taiwan and its discontents," 172.

³² Shu-Fen Lin, "'Democratization' in Taiwan and its discontents," 172.

³³ Koopmanns, "The Missing Link between Structure and Agency," 28.

been developed with different questions in mind. The the newer approaches though try to bring them together to come to a more comprehensive understanding of social movements. None of the above mentioned theories concentrates on transnational activism. Yet they can still be used to understand problems of transnationalisation. When trying to explain the emergence and success of social movements one has to look at the interplay between the institutional and discursive conditions and the possibilities and creative capabilities of activists to move within them and use them for their purposes. This is also true for transnational movements although a greater level of complexity exists. Some of the theories that explicitly deal with transnational movements seem to suggest this, too. However another strand argues tat transnational activism is a new type of actor and thus implies that new set of theoretical tools is needed for their analysis.

1.2 New Paradigms

New theories of social movements pose the questions of why movements transnationalize and examine the conditions necessary for this to happen. There are different answers to these questions and I will sketch out some of the most prominent theoretical outlooks. However, contrary to what some of the scholars argue, I do not believe it is useful to presume the existence of a new type of collective actor but rather to stick to the more traditional perspectives offered by social movement theory and extend them to fit the international arena.³⁴

There are a number of scholars that refer to a “global civil society” in order to explain the emergence of transnational protests and activist networks. The transnsnationalization of activism is then seen as being the product of, or a constitutive part of “globalization”.

³⁴ Deborah Yashar, "Globalization and Collective Action," *Comparative Politics* 34, no. 3 (2002): 370-371, accessed December 15, 2012, <http://www.jstor.org/stable/4146958>.

The end of the Cold war and growing interconnectedness has undermined the territorial distinction between 'civil' and 'uncivil' societies, between the 'democratic West and the 'non-democratic east and South [...].³⁵

This, according to Mary Kaldor and others, leads to the emergence of transnational or global civil networks. "What matters in future political struggles is what kind of coalitions are made by these different grouping."³⁶ The newness of the phenomenon is heavily emphasized. It is argued that though in the West transnational activist networks developed in the wake of 1968, the true transnational era started only after the end of the Cold War. Others see it starting a bit later and suggest that the protest at the Ministerial Conference of the World Trade Organization in Seattle 1999 is the beginning of this transnational activism age.³⁷

The cause for the transnationalization of political activism here lies in large-scale structural changes. Globalization, according to these studies, is producing a number of new cleavages along which the new global activism is forming. The alter-globalization movement that targets global neoliberal institutions is often mentioned as one example but also the environmental movement. However, at the same time, it is argued these movements themselves also constitute globalization, not economic globalization but a social or cultural form of globalization. "To understand GCS [Global Civil Society] and its politics, in short, requires us to consider how 'global' actors are produced in a realm characterized by diffuse forms of power, and why GCS must be recognized as a product of neo-liberal globalization

³⁵ Mary Kaldor, *Global Civil Society: An Answer to War*, (Cambridge: Polity Press, 2003), p. 2. See also: Ruth Reitan, *Global Activism*. (London: Routledge, 2007).

³⁶ Mary Kaldor, "Global Civil Society", in *The Global Transformations Reader: An Introduction to the Globalization Debate*, ed. David Held and Anthony McGrew (Cambridge: Polity Press, 2003), 562.

³⁷ Juris coined the term "Seattle effect", referring to circumstances that made the protests in Seattle a global media event. Jeffrey S. Juris, *Networking Futures: the Movements against Corporate Globalization*, (Durham: Duke University Press, 2008).

rather than something distinct from or necessarily in opposition to it."³⁸

However, the concept of global civil society offers little insight into how exactly and why certain types of protests and activist networks start to transnationalize. It suggests a macro perspective on structural issues but says little about how things are done and why activists decide to do so. Rather it is somehow implied that as global problems occur, global coalitions against them are forming. Thus also the cases that are analyzed remain limited. The most studies are dealing with anti-neoliberal protest such as those against World Trade Forums or against the G8 summit or large meetings of alter-globalization movements as the World Social Forum.³⁹ However, grievances or the availability of a common target is not enough to explain mobilization was already the criticism of the framing perspective on the political process model. There is no convincing reason it should not be valid for criticizing transnational activism as well.⁴⁰ Whether or not a certain issue is global, national or local is not self-explanatory. Rather it has to be "framed" and sold that way. For example, Spanish and Dutch farmers were protesting against certain agricultural policies that were adopted on the EU-level. However, the protest on the Spanish as well as on the Dutch side remained national, in the sense that their own government was considered to be the primary target of protest.⁴¹

³⁸ Ronnie D. Lippschutz, "Power, Politics and Global Civil Society," *Millennium: Journal of International Studies* 33, no.3 (2005): 750, doi: 10.1177/03058298050330030401.

³⁹ see for example Carlos R.S. Milani and Ruthy Nadia Laniado, "Transnational Social Movements and the Globalization Agenda: a methodological approach based on the analysis of the World Social Forum," *Brazilian Political Science Review* 1, no.2 (2007): 10-39, accessed January 6, 2013, http://socialsciences.scielo.org/scielo.php?pid=S1981-38212007000200001&script=sci_arttext&tlng=en; Rüdiger Korf and Valeska Pailin Korf, "Weltforen, internationale Bewegungen, Nichtregierungsorganisationen und Entwicklungsorganisationen," in *Soziologie der globalen Gesellschaft: Eine Einführung*, ed. Franz Kolland, Petra Dannecker, August Gächter & Christian Suter (Vienna: Mandelbaum Verlag, 2010), pp. 235-263.

⁴⁰ Tarrow, *New Transnational Activism*, 6.

⁴¹ Bert Klandermans, Marga de Weerd, José Manuel Sabucedo and Mauro Rodriguez, M, "Framing Contention: Dutch and Spanish farmers confront the EU," in *Contentious Europeans: Protests and Politics in an emerging Polity*, ed. Doug Imig and Sidney Tarrow (Boulder, CO: Rowman & Littlefield Press, 2001), 77-96.

The Zapatista struggle is a good example as well of how "meaning making" is crucial for transnationalizing a movement. In Mexico compared to the Dutch and Spanish peasants the opposite happened. A primarily national struggle became highly transnationalized by the use of a particular language and the Zapatista's clever use of the Internet. Ejército Zapatista de Liberación Nacional (EZLN, eng. The Zapatista Army of National Liberation) formed already in the 1980s but the first large-scale public appearance was on January 1, 1994. The primary aim was to initiate a Mexican revolution and fight against "the exploitative combination of unresolved land claims, lack of social services, institutional atrophy, authoritarian political bosses, monstrous deformation in the justice system, and the general lack of democracy."⁴² The situation had been bad in Chiapas but new regulations concerning the privatization of land and the signing of the North Atlantic Treaty Agreement (NAFTA) between the US and Mexico were likely to make matters considerably worse. It must be noted that accusing a transnational agreement, by itself, is not what made the movement successful beyond Mexican borders.

Rather, it is the specific style of the Zapatista movement and their careful and deliberate choice of how to frame their struggle that allowed their cause to transcend beyond the immediate societal context. In their public statements, speeches and communiqués the anonymous spokesperson of the Zapatistas, Sub-commandante Marcos, emphasized that though the Zapatista movement is a local Mexican force, their aims are universal and that they are one with all the oppressed in the world and all those who are fighting against neo-liberal policies. "The General Command's assertion of a shared identity with a diversity of others facing oppression is a powerful rhetorical move because even as it

⁴² Hernández Navarro in Khasnabish in Alex Khasnabish, *Zapatistas: Rebellion from the Grassroots to the Global*, (London/New York: Zed Books, 2010), p. 59-60.

affirms a common struggle it does not erase or subsume difference."⁴³

However, though globalization per se does not explain transnational mobilization, it does not mean that interconnections between states, people, and markets have no influence on mobilization efforts. Rather, it seems that to take the international sphere as one possible arena of action might be the most fruitful approach. This perspective entails an extension of the political opportunity structure and the potential resources, symbols and meanings to the global level. Tarrow here uses the term internationalism to describe this new sphere of opportunities. "Internationalism provides an opportunity structure within which transnational activism occurs."⁴⁴ Yet, the question is when these opportunities are likely to be exploited.

Margret Keck and Kathryn Sikkink are sensitive to these new possibilities and offer a valuable framework for analyzing the rise of transnational activism. In their book, *Activist Beyond Borders*, that has proven essential to many students of transnational social movement studies, they identify several factors that possibly lead to the emergence of transnational activism. According to them, a movement may move from the national to the transnational sphere if domestic communication channels to their own government are blocked, "political entrepreneurs" take matters into their hands, and transnational forums and conferences offer possibilities of contact between different groups. Especially of interest is the "boomerang effect", that presumably occurs when national actors use international institutions to pressure their domestic governments.⁴⁵

Thus, although they claim that the transnational network forms a new type of collective, in the end the three factors they use as indicators for the likelihood of

⁴³ Khasnabish, *Zapatistas: Rebellion from the Grassroots to the Global*, 194.

⁴⁴ Tarrow, *New Transnational Activism*, 7.

⁴⁵ Keck and Sikkink, *Activist beyond borders*, 12.

transnationalization are dependent on the domestic circumstances. Indeed, several scholars remind us that the interplay between domestic and international factors is highly contested. The relations between the transnational and domestic groups are not clear, as even if the international site plays a role, a convergence of goals and strategies between domestic and international groups is not self-evident.⁴⁶ In this sense, transnational activists' networks might just be another form of a temporary alliance. This view has also been taken by Alison Brysk in her analysis of indigenous communities in Latin America and their fight for recognition. Although the international arena offers a potential source of symbols, information and partners, local groups are not dependent on the international sphere and will promote their causes even if no transnational networks and allies are available.⁴⁷

Tarrow suggests another factor that makes transnationalization of movements likely. He argues that it requires a form of "rooted cosmopolitanism" in order for actors to seek out opportunities for political action beyond the national borders. This is related to what Sikkink and Keck mean by "entrepreneurial activist." People who are aware of international politics and opportunities and who read foreign books speak languages and have connections abroad.⁴⁸ He also remarks that for most people the international activism is only one aspect. Most activists start in their domestic context and only temporarily engage in transnational activities.

Moreover, it is important to note that in general transnational activism is not equally present everywhere. He sees Western Europe as specifically outstanding in this regard. The European Union offers a lot of opportunities as it is a highly internationalized structure and

⁴⁶ Cath Collin, *Post-transitional Justice: Human Rights Trials in Chile and El Salvador* (University Park: Penn State University Press, 2010), p. 54.

⁴⁷ Alison Brysk, *From Tribal Village to Global Village: Indian Rights and International Relations in Latin America* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2010).

⁴⁸ Tarrow, *The New Transnational Activism*, 35.

the Western countries are particularly well integrated and have the necessary resources to seize the opportunities this context offers.⁴⁹

I think to analyze enabling and restricting factors concerning transnationalization of social movements it is more relevant theories that do not presuppose that transnational activists are new unitary are the most relevant. They largely build on theories and concepts developed to analyze movement activities on the national level but consider the specific conditions for transnational activism. To move protests beyond borders in most cases requires more or at least different sets of skills, other types of resources and an awareness for the institutional and discursive structure of the international arena.

The case study of Hungarian activists will further elucidate why transnationalization does or does not take place. I argue that activist in fact would like to enjoy more international support, the specificities of the Hungarian context are unfavorable towards these aims.

2. Government Policies

In April 2010 Orbán's party Fidesz won 52.7% of the votes at the parliamentary elections. It is a peculiarity of the Hungarian electoral system to grant a disproportionately high number of seats to the winning party, which therefore acquired 227 of the 386 seats in parliament. Together with their coalition party, the small conservative party Kereszténydemokrata Néppárt (KDMP, eng. Christian Democratic People's Party) that got an additional 36 seats, the coalition acquired a two-thirds majority.

The Magyar Szocialista Párt (MSZP, eng. Hungarian Socialist Party), which had

⁴⁹ Tarrow, *The New Transnational Activism*, 35. See also: Habermann, who draws attention to the fact, that unequal power-relations exists even on such supposedly open events as the Global Social Forum and that groups from disadvantaged communities, like poor peasants in India are also marginalized within transnational movements. Friederike Habermann, "Transnationale soziale Bewegungen: die Reproduktion von Ungleichheit in Theorien und Praktiken globaler zivilgesellschaftlicher Politik," *Politik und Peripherie : eine politikwissenschaftliche Einführung*, ed. Ilker Atac, Albert Kraler, Aram Ziai (Wien: Mandelbaum Verlag, 2011), 243-256.

formed the previous outgoing government, won 19.3% or 59 seats and the far-right party Jobbik Magyarországért Mozgalom (Jobbik, eng. The Movement for a Better Hungary) 16.6% or 47 seats. The newly founded green party Lehet Más a Politika (LMP, eng. Politics can be different) was also voted into parliament with 7.4% or 16 seats. The voter turnout was at 64.3%.

Many voted for Fidesz because of a wide loss of legitimacy and trust in the MSZP government, especially after the scandal of 2006. During a closed party-meeting in Balatonőszöd the then prime-minister Ferenc Gyurcsány told his partisans that the MSZP had lied to the public and would not be able to keep its welfare promises. Instead, budgetary cuts, among others in the health care and education sectors, were introduced to decrease the fiscal deficit. The speech was subsequently made public and caused massive outrage. Protests were organized in front of the parliament and elsewhere in Budapest and other Hungarian cities that partly resulted in violent encounters between the police and the demonstrators. The protesters were a heterogeneous crowd, disappointed middle-class people, students upset about the education reform, etc. Importantly, conservative and right-wing groups were dominant and Viktor Orbán and Fidesz members kept demanding the resignation of Gyurcsány.⁵⁰ Thus, at least some of the votes for Fidesz can be interpreted as a demonstration of protest rather than a whole-hearted support for the Fidesz ideology. Even though its support has weakened, Fidesz remains popular. According to the opinion polling company Nezőpont in February 2013 it was still the strongest party with 32% of the population supporting it.⁵¹

Fidesz is a member of the European-People's Party and thus part of the group of

⁵⁰ Thomas von Ahn, "Demokratie oder Straße: Fragile Stabilität in Ungarn," *Osteuropa* 10, (2006): 89-104, accessed August 9, 2012, <http://www.osteuropa.dgo-online.org/issues/issue.fulltext.2006.1159653600000.9>.

⁵¹ "Változatlan erőviszonyok," Nezőpont Intézet, March 13, 2013, <http://nezopontintezet.hu/mufajok/kozvelemenykutatas/>.

Christian-conservative and national-conservative parties in the European parliament but it is far more populist than most of them. Even though populism is a vague term, there are several characteristics that populist parties have in common. They often develop out of movements, rely on a charismatic leader, and most importantly present themselves as the embodiment of a common popular will.⁵²

Populism builds on blurred promises and has no strategic political concepts, and became fashionable to sell leading ECE [Eastern Central European] politicians. In fact, populism is a welcomed power instrument for certain politicians, suitable to point to institutional weaknesses of ECE political systems and political adversaries. But, populism does not offer fundamental solutions or an alternative value system. Populist measures mostly rely on the charisma of the leader and his ability to camouflage real problem-solution.⁵³

In this sense Victor Orbán's party can indeed be described as populist. Their government was in fact called "autocratic", "undemocratic" and even "fascist"⁵⁴ by several press commentators and political analysts, but it seems to me that some of these analyses are too alarmist, since they were elected democratically and Hungary remains a democracy. On the other hand, Fidesz's course is far more radical than that of its European Christian-conservative equivalents in Germany for example.

Prime Minister Orbán described his second electoral victory⁵⁵ as a "Revolution in the polling booths". According to him, it was only then, in 2010, that the country finally overcame its communist legacy and entered a new era. Consequently he started to reform

⁵² Werner T. Bauer, "Rechtsextreme und Rechtspopulistische Parteien in Europa," *Österreichische Gesellschaft für Politikberatung und Entwicklung* (October 2012): 10, accessed November 3, 2012, http://www.politikberatung.or.at/typo3/fileadmin/02_Studien/6_europa/Rechte_Parteien.pdf.

⁵³ Nicole Galliana, "Political Elites in Eastern Central Europe: Paving the Way for 'Negative Europeanisation?'," *Contemporary European Studies* 2 (2007): 80-81, accessed December 4, 2012, http://nicolegalliana.com/docstexts/04_text_political_elite_2007_ng.pdf.

⁵⁴ See also an article in the Budapest Times complaining about overreactions of the foreign press. Anat Kálmán, "Western Press Colluding in attacks on Orbán," *The Budapest Times*, January 17, 2012, www.budapesttimes.hu/2012/01/17/western-press-colluding-in-attacks-on-orban/.

⁵⁵ Fidesz had won the elections in 1998 and governed Hungary between 1998 and 2002.

the country at a high speed and with far-reaching consequences. By December 2011, the new government had passed more than 350 laws at the parliament.⁵⁶ Since Orbán came into office there have been major changes to state and independent institutions of Hungary and many of the old and new positions that have been created are often invested with additional powers and filled by people close to Fidesz and loyal friends of Orbán. In many cases the terms of offices have also been extended, For example, that of the President of the Supreme Court was extended to six years, that of the Head of the Media and Communication agency and the Ombudsman to nine years, and that of the Head of the National Audit Office to twelve years. Moreover, public officials can be fired without previous notice.⁵⁷ It also occurred on several occasions that when Fidesz wanted to pass a law that was deemed unconstitutional the constitution was simply adjusted.

This happened in July 2010, after the Constitutional Court declared it against the law to introduce the aforementioned retroactive tax of 98%. When the Hungarian Constitutional Court ruled against the first draft of the law, the capacities of the court were curtailed. Following this, a second version of the law was waved through in parliament. However, this one was revoked by the Court in May, 2011.⁵⁸

2.1 Constitutional Change

The most important consequence of the second election victory of Fidesz was the adoption of an entirely new constitution in April 2011, effective from January 1, 2012. While it is true that Hungary did not make an entirely new constitution after the fall of socialism, the

⁵⁶ András Bozóki, "Autoritäre Versuchung: die Krise der ungarischen Demokratie," *Osteuropa* 61, no.12 (2011): 77.

⁵⁷ Bozóki, "Autoritäre Versuchung," 79.

⁵⁸ Bozóki, "Autoritäre Versuchung, 79. See also: Gregor Mayer, "Verfassungsgericht in Ungarn beschränkt," *Der Standard*, November 16, 2010, <http://derstandard.at/1289608042835/Verfassungsgericht-in-Ungarn-beschaenkt>. And: MTI, "Megsemmisítette az AB a 98 százalékos különadót," *Világgazdaság*, May 6, 2011, <http://www.vg.hu/gazdasag/adozas/megsemmisitette-az-ab-a-98-szazalekos-kulonadot-348021>.

content of the 1949 constitution was so fundamentally revised after 1989 that it served the country fairly well for the last two decades.⁵⁹ Fidesz, conversely, argued that Hungary needed a new constitution to finally overcome its communist legacy.⁶⁰ The government even blasphemously nicknamed it "husvéti alkotmány" - "Easter Constitution" to emphasize the supposed awakening of the country from its 'communist' past.

Interestingly, Fidesz is not the first party that has tried to adopt a new constitution in post-communist Hungary: the MSZP government attempted to pass a new fundamental law between 1994 and 1998 but was not able to reach an agreement.⁶¹ However, it appears that the move by Fidesz is not motivated by the lack of merits of the old constitution but by the need to create a document that ensures the long-term influence of Fidesz. Even if they lose the next elections the constitution is likely to stay and the new government will have to abide by its rules.⁶²

The period of preparation for the new constitution was very short: in merely six months the ad-hoc parliamentary committee created the first draft. In March, there was a one-month review period during which no parliamentary or public debates took place, however.⁶³ Under the leadership of József Szájer, a Fidesz representative in the European Parliament, a period of so-called "national consultation" was organized. Questionnaires with twelve multiple-choice questions were sent out to Hungarian households. The representativeness of this survey is rather doubtful and it does not appear as an honest

⁵⁹ Iván Halász, "Creation and Characteristics of the new fundamental law of Hungary," *The Lawyer Quarterly* 1, no.2 (2011): 86-87.

⁶⁰ see for example essay by Navracsics, <http://conservativehome.blogs.com/platform/2012/01/tibor-navracsics-hungarys-constitution-and-cardinal-laws-completing-the-political-institutional-and-.html>

⁶¹ Halász, "Creation and Characteristics of the new fundamental law of Hungary," 87.

⁶² MTI, "MSZP: a Fidesz érdekeit tükrözi az új alkotmány koncepciója," *Népszabadság Online*, December 2, 2010, http://nol.hu/belfold/mszp_a_Fidesz_erdekeit_tukrozi_az_uj_alkotmany_koncepcioja.

⁶³ Küpper, "Mit Mängeln," 137.

attempt to consult the population. For example, it was argued that the provided answer-options were very limited and larger issues were therefore lost among the questions about minor issues, such as whether or not the population would support life-long prison sentences.⁶⁴ Moreover, no reliable data is available on how many people returned the questionnaires. The government claims that 11% of the questionnaires were sent back but it is not possible to verify that information.⁶⁵

During the parliamentary vote on the constitution MSZP and LMP did not participate, while Jobbik voted against it. This makes the new constitution very problematic as it should ideally represent the whole country and provide a political vision that most people can agree upon. Other countries, for example, Romania (1991), Poland (1997) and Lithuania (1992) held referendums on their respective constitution to avoid a breach of legitimacy.

To complement the constitution, an unusually large number of the so-called "Cardinal Laws" also needing a two-third parliamentary majority were passed. The complementary character of the cardinal laws was explicitly stated by Fidesz, for example by Deputy Prime Minister Tibor Navracsics. In his essay published on conservativehome.blog.com he explains: "In this way, Hungary's new Fundamental Law will serve as the backbone of Hungarian democracy; and the cardinal laws will complete the political, institutional and intellectual renewal of the country. The government is drawing a clear line under the post-communist period that has endured for the last 20 years."⁶⁶ This has very practical consequences, as there are more than 50 references in the constitution to cardinal laws. This basically leads to

⁶⁴ Küpper, "Mit Mängeln," 137.

⁶⁵ Paul Krugmann, "Hungary, Misunderstood?", *The Conscience of a liberal - The New York Times* (blog), January 21, 2012, <http://krugman.blogs.nytimes.com/2012/01/21/hungary-misunderstood/>. See also Adrienn Vona, "Szájér: Óriási siker a nemzeti konzultáció," *Magyar Nemzet Online*, April 14, 2011, 11% (916941) http://mno.hu/migr_1834/szajer-oriasi-siker-a-nemzeti-konzultacio-179065.

⁶⁶ Tibor Navracsics, "Hungary's Constitution and Cardinal Laws – completing the political, institutional and intellectual renewal of Hungary," *Conservativehome* (blog), January 10, 2012, <http://conservativehome.blogs.com/platform/2012/01/tibor-navracsics-hungarys-constitution-and-cardinal-laws-completing-the-political-institutional-and-html>.

a blurring of the distinction between constitutional and cardinal laws.⁶⁷

For example, the decision for a 16% flat tax on personal income⁶⁸ will now need a two-thirds majority to be reversed. Tax regulations are usually not a constitutional matter: they are seen as being at the discretion of the government and dependent on what kind of social policy they want to follow. Already in its report of June 2011, the Venice Commission expressed its concerns that the wide use of Cardinal Laws in Hungary is problematic it displaces the border between ordinary and constitutional politics.⁶⁹

Moreover, the altered status of the Constitutional Court is also seen as disquieting. In June 2011 it was decided that the number of seats would be raised from 11 to 15. Since one seat was vacant, the parliament appointed five new constitutional judges. In addition to this, the President of the Constitutional Court is now appointed by parliament and not by the members of the judicial body itself.⁷⁰

At the same time, the competences of the constitutional court have been diminished: it is no longer allowed to control financial laws, for example, but is only responsible for examining in how far they comply with human rights.⁷¹ Nevertheless, the power of the constitutional court should not be underestimated as it still delivers judgments that are

⁶⁷ Katalin Kelemen, "The New Hungarian Constitution: European Criticalities" (paper presented in Trento, Italy (Winter Trento European Seminar), December 15-16, 2011): 4, accessed December 19, 2012, http://www.academia.edu/1184042/K._Kelemen_The_New_Hungarian_Constitution_European_Criticalities_2011_.

⁶⁸ Edith Balázs, "Hungary Will Stick to Cardinal Law on Flat Taxes, Nemzet Says," *bloomberg.com*, April 12, 2012, <http://www.bloomberg.com/news/2012-04-12/hungary-will-stick-to-cardinal-law-on-flat-taxes-nemzet-says.html>

⁶⁹ see the opinion on of the Venice Commission on the new Constitution of Hungary: European Commission for Democracy through Law (Venice Commission), "Opinion on the New Constitution of Hungary," Opinion no. 621/2011, adopted in Venice on June 17-18, 2011, accessed May 15, 2012, <http://www.venice.coe.int/webforms/documents/CDL-AD%282011%29016-E.aspx>.

⁷⁰ Bozóki, "Autoritäre Versuchung", p. 78. Also: APA, "Fidesz bringt Verfassungsgericht unter ihre Kontrolle," *Der Standard*, June 28, 2011, <http://derstandard.at/1308679855201/Fidesz-bringt-auch-Verfassungsgericht-unter-ihre-Kontrolle>.

⁷¹ It is also true that so far the court interprets the phrase "to comply with human rights" very broadly and thus the daily practice has not been influenced strongly. Halmai, "Hochproblematisch," 149.

counteracting Fidesz policies. In July 2012, for example it ruled that the forced retirement of judges was unconstitutional.⁷²

Also the preamble of the constitution that serves as general guideline for its interpretation, is very much contested. Its style recalls the pathos of 19th century nationalist revivals, unsuitable for the twenty-first century. It is called "Nemzeti Hitvallás" (eng. National Credo) and, as Krisztián Ungváry recently argued, "[...] intends to articulate something, which according Hungarians who are not right wing-conservatives is already history."⁷³ Its first phrase is "God bless Hungarians", it stresses Christian values, the national cultural heritage, past achievements of Hungary and elevates the Holy Crown of St. Stephen⁷⁴ to a national symbol for modern Hungary.⁷⁵ Overall, it strongly emphasizes the ethnic (Magyar) core of the Hungarian nation. The preamble does not so much define Hungary as a political entity but as an ethnic and cultural community that is united spiritually and intellectually by its history. Not only does the preamble exclude a range of non-Magyar and non-Christian groups within contemporary Hungary's borders who have been part of Hungarian history for centuries, but it also invites the Hungarian minorities living abroad in the countries of the "Carpathian-basin" to feel included in the Hungarian nation at the expenses of those minorities.⁷⁶

⁷² "Ungarn: Verfassungsgericht stoppt umstrittene Richterpensionierung," *Spiegel Online*, July 17, 2012, <http://www.spiegel.de/politik/ausland/ungarisches-verfassungsgericht-stoppt-richterpensionierung-a-844728.html>.

⁷³ Krisztián Ungváry, "'Lager und Fahne sind eins': Fatale Traditionen in Ungarns Erinnerungskultur," *Osteuropa* 61, no.12 (2011): 122.

German original: "[...]beabsichtigt etwas zu aktualisieren, was nach Auffassung jener Ungarn, die nicht rechts konservative sind, Geschichte ist."

⁷⁴ King St. Stephen (969 - 1038), the first Christian king of Hungary, counts as a founder of the Hungarian statehood.

⁷⁵ June 25, 2012 the parliament even passed law according to which insulting the Holy Steven's Crown will be punished with prison sentences up to one year. ORF News, "Ungarn: Gefängnis für Beleidigung der Heiligen Krone," *ORF*, June 25, 2012, <http://orf.at/stories/2127730/>.

⁷⁶ Herbert Küpper, "Mit Mängeln: Ungarns neues Grundgesetz," *Osteuropa* 61, no.12 (2011): 138. On "ethnonation" see also Gábor Halmai, "Hochproblematisch: Ungarns neues Grundgesetz," *Osteuropa* 61, no.12 (2011): 146.

2.2 The Art World

Fidesz's view of Hungarian history and culture is exemplified by its relationship with the Hungarian art world. In Hungary it is common practice to replace the most important directors and managers of cultural institutions after a change of government. The heads of public TV-channels and theaters often lose their position when a former opposition party assumes power. But the extent to which the Fidesz government has tried to influence the Hungarian cultural scene is extreme even for Hungarian standards.⁷⁷ Their aim to reform the Hungarian cultural landscape according to their nationalist perspective was already prevalent during their first government. "The key visible investments of the Fidesz era 1998 - 2002 were in architecture and culture: the new National Theater, the Millenium Park with an exhibition of Hungarians making the world and Terror House Museum, together with numerous memorials and a costume drama of 'the Greatest Hungarian' count Szécsényi."⁷⁸

One example for the current government's instrumentalization of art is the exhibition held at the National Gallery from January 2012 until January 2013 that offered the chance to observe the government's understanding of Hungarian history.⁷⁹ In autumn 2011 Fidesz had commissioned 15 paintings that would serve to illustrate the new constitution. These paintings were exhibited in the National Gallery, next to some other works of Hungarian youths. In the main exhibition hall on the upper floor, paintings of Hungarian heroes, kings and saints were on display. Art critics generally agreed that the commissioned paintings lacked artistic quality and used confusing iconography. "If this is state patronage of the arts

⁷⁷ András Bozóki, "Occupy the State: The Orbán Regime in Hungary," *Debatte: Journal of Contemporary Central and Eastern Europe* 19, no. 3 (2011): 657, accessed September 10, 2012, <http://dx.doi.org/10.1080/0965156X.2012.703415>.

⁷⁸ Emilia Palonen, "Transition in Hungary: Whistle-Blowing on the Naked Emperor," *Politics & Policy* 40, no.5 (2012): 937, accessed November 15, 2012, doi: 10.1111/j.1747-1346.2012.00389.x.

⁷⁹ Website of the Hungarian National Gallery: "Heroes, Kings, Saints. Images and Documents from the History of Hungary," Hungarian National Gallery, accessed January 12, 2013, http://www.mng.hu/en/exhibitions/hosok_nyito_en.

and fine art representation, then it's cheap, weak, dull and didactic," said even the curator of the exhibit, Gábor Bellák, according to Origo. "One must either do better or nothing."⁸⁰ Perhaps no article has done a better job to illustrate the absurdity of this exhibit than the sarcastic review of the exhibition on index.hu.⁸¹

The exhibition's negative portrayal of communists and the very one-sided historical perspective are striking. Imre Nagy, for example, was executed by the Russians for his role in the Hungarian uprising of 1956 and thus could actually be regarded as a national hero. Unfortunately, he was also a communist. Since Fidesz wants to be seen as the only moral heir of 1956, Nagy is only present on a very small painting: "blink and you would miss it."⁸²

The paintings also present a very particular interpretation of history. The painting *Trianon* by Tibor Kis (see Figure 1) for example suggests that a pact between communists and international secret forces, see the Free Mason's symbol in the right lower corner, caused the loss of large parts of Hungarian territory after World War I. A similar tendency is visible in the painting of Sándor Filep (see Figure 2) meant to describe the Hungarian Republic of Councils. The red devilish figure on the painting and the slogan "to arms! to arms!" is a take out from a historical placard.

It seems that the devilish figure is addressing workers who defeat the vulnerable figures of the ancien regime. But the original placard was a propaganda poster that was used to organize the military defense of Hungary against Romanians and Slovenians.

⁸⁰ Catherine Hickley, "Hungary's Heroes, Artists Enlisted to Push Orban Policy: Review," *bloomberg.com*, March 14, 2012, <http://www.bloomberg.com/news/2012-03-14/hungary-s-heroes-artists-enlisted-to-push-orban-policy-review.html>.

⁸¹ András Földes, Gábor Miklósi and László Szily, "Orbán Viktor egy kameleon mellett kerül be az Alkotmányba," *index.hu*, November 8, 2011, http://index.hu/belfold/2011/11/08/orban_viktor_kameleon_kepeben_kerul_az_alkotmanyba/. See also : András Rényi, "Staatskunst und ihre Abgründe: Ein Gespräch über den Geist der Zeit," *Osteuropa*, 61, no. 12 (2011): 393-400.

⁸² Catherine Hickley, "Hungary's Heroes, Artists Enlisted to Push Orban Policy: Review," *bloomberg.com*, March 14, 2012, <http://www.bloomberg.com/news/2012-03-14/hungary-s-heroes-artists-enlisted-to-push-orban-policy-review.html>.

Therefore, the painting indirectly supports an interpretation of history that puts the blame for the loss of Hungarian territories, determined in the Treaty of Trianon, on the Hungarian Councils. It was actually Miklós Horthy's people who actually signed the Treaty in 1920, when the Council had already been already overthrown.



(Figure 1 - Tibor Kiss "Trianon"⁸³)



(Figure 2 - Sándor Filep "Fegyverbe, Fegyverbe"⁸⁴)

There have been other interferences with the art world as well. Róbert Alföldi, director of the National Theater for example will have to leave his post in August 2013. This is probably a direct consequence of his attempt to make his theater available to the Romanian cultural ministry. The Romanians had planned to use The National Theater as a location to celebrate Romanian Great Union day.⁸⁵ Hungarian public officials judged this as a huge faux-pas and in the end Alföldi withdrew his offer. Another controversial step was to replace the director of

⁸³ Figure 1 - Tibor Kiss. "Trianon", available from: http://kkbk.blog.hu/2011/12/09/alkotmanyos_festeszet.

⁸⁴ Figure 2 - Sándor Filep. "Fegyverbe, Fegyverbe", available from: http://kkbk.blog.hu/2011/12/09/alkotmanyos_festeszet.

⁸⁵ The Great Union Day is the anniversary of the annexation of Transylvania to Romania by the end of WWI. For the Hungarians this then resulted in the Treaty of Trianon that established the new, diminished territory of Hungary.

the New Theater.⁸⁶ Instead of the liberal István Márta, the actor György Dörner who sympathizes with the far-right party Jobbik took over the management of the theater in February 2012. Initially, he wanted to work together with István Csurka, the president of the former right wing party Magyar Igazság és Élet Pártja (MIÉP, eng. English: Hungarian Justice and Life Party), but after he had died in February 2012, Zsolt Pozsgai became the artistic director. In their application for the post they expressed their intention of establishing national culture and values in the theater. According to András Bozóki this was a concession by Fidesz to the right-wing voters of Jobbik, that Fidesz would like to win.⁸⁷

The latest scandal in the art world that received considerable coverage concerned an exhibition in the Műcsarnok Budapest "Mi a Magyar?" - "What is Hungarian?". Under Fidesz the formerly private Magyar Művészeti Akadémia (MMA, eng.- Hungarian Academy of Arts) became a semi-official state authority.⁸⁸ Now they are responsible for some of Budapest's cultural institutions. Among others, the Műcsarnok Budapest and the Pest Concert Hall.

The "What is Hungarian?" - exhibition caused outrage among the members of MMA, especially the president, György Fekete. He criticized part of the artworks as "degenerated" and the exhibition as a whole as blasphemous. The true "Hungarian-ness" would not be represented there, according to him.⁸⁹ After heavy criticism and the decision to assign the management of the Műcsarnok to the MMA, former director Gábor Gulyas resigned from his post.

⁸⁶ Hungarian original: Új Színház

⁸⁷ Bozoki, "Occupy the State," p. 657.

⁸⁸ "Alapszabály," Magyar Művészeti Akadémia, accessed January 3, 2013, <http://www.mma.hu/alapszabaly>.

⁸⁹ "Gleichgeschaltete Nationalkunst gegen die 'moderne Demokratie'," *Pusztaranger* (blog), December 14, 2012, <http://pusztaranger.wordpress.com/2012/12/14/gleichgeschaltete-nationalkunst-gegen-die-moderne-demokratie/>. See also: Szabolcs Dull, "Elkerekedett a Fideszesek szeme a nemzeti pezsgéstől," *Origo*, November 30, 2012, <http://www.origo.hu/itthon/20121130-a-magyar-muveszeti-akademia-botanyoktol-es-gusztustalansagtol-mentes-kultur-at-akar.html>.

This overview here is by no means complete but I think it makes abundantly clear that Fidesz's influence on the arts and cultural scene of Hungary is remarkable. Fidesz is actively trying to silence critical voices and at the same time pushing its own ideological outlook. Of course this does not mean that all art institutions are under its influence. Yet, its effect should not be underestimated, especially given that the constitution and its preamble are even more powerful tool for Fidesz to institutionalize its ideological outlook.

2.3 Media Laws

Particular attention must be paid to the media laws introduced by Fidesz, since they seriously impede oppositional forces and civil society. This is important as it shows that the channels between the government are seriously hampered. According to Keck and Sikkink these factors would make a transnationalization of the social movement against Fidesz more likely.⁹⁰ Existing literature suggests that activist groups, when the domestic government is unwilling to listen to their demands, are likely to seek out transnational allies. The media laws passed by Fidesz illustrate perfectly that the government is systematically trying to block out dissenting opinions and is not willing to enter a dialogue with its citizenry.

Fidesz has re-organized the Hungarian media landscape to a large extent. Already throughout the years before coming into power, the circles around Orbán made constant efforts to create a Fidesz-friendly media environment by re-directing funds to favorable media companies. Party financing is not transparent in Hungary. Political analyst Mária Vársarhelyi estimates that 20-30% of public investments end up in party funds. This can be done more or less discreetly. To conceal the budget of their party and channel certain sums to unrecognized beneficiaries is not a peculiarity of Fidesz. Because Fidesz has strong internal hierarchies, however, and is centrally organized, it was more efficient than other

⁹⁰ Margaret E. Keck and Kathryn Sikkink, "Activism Beyond Borders," 12.

parties in systematically utilizing this money for political purposes without losing it to corrupted party members dealing with it.⁹¹

In July 2010 Fidesz started to establish a completely new framework for regulating the media.⁹² The main organ is now the National Media and Infocommunications Authority⁹³ with an executive body, the Media Council, consisting of five members. The joint president of the two institutions is Annamária Szálai. Significantly, she was appointed by Victor Orbán personally and will stay in office for nine years, longer, therefore, than one legislative period. The Media Authority is responsible for broadcast, on-line and print products and ensures that 'common morality' is not violated, that news-reports are 'balanced'⁹⁴ and do not endanger national security. It also fixes the prices for the different TV and radio frequencies and decides about their attribution.⁹⁵ Moreover the Hungarian News Agency, the Hungarian Television, the Hungarian Radio and the Duna TV are now united under the umbrella of a newly created Public Service Foundation.⁹⁶

The consequences of the new media controls are far-reaching. For example, it is extraordinary and caused much public outrage that, until November 2011, close to 900 journalists have been fired by public radio and TV channels. An example for the insecure status of independent media is the case of the radio station Klubrádió, which is clearly too

⁹¹ Mária Vásárhelyi, "Angriff auf die Pressefreiheit: Die Medienpolitik der Fidesz-Regierung," *Osteuropa* 61, no.12 (2011): 160.

⁹² On the 22nd of July the National Media authority was created. The media laws passed in December 2010 establish the Media Council and its wide ranging competencies.

⁹³ Nemzeti Média- és Hírközlési Hatóság (NMHH).
Website: <http://english.nmhh.hu/>

⁹⁴ after objections from the EU blogs were exempted from the obligation to give a balanced account: "Ungarns Parlament ändert Mediengesetz," *Zeit Online*, March 8, 2012, <http://www.zeit.de/politik/ausland/2011-03/ungarn-mediengesetz-aenderungen>.

⁹⁵ Vásárhelyi, "Angriff auf die Pressefreiheit," 161-162.

⁹⁶ Péter Bajomi-Lázár, "The Party Colonisation of the Media : The Case of Hungary," *East European Politics and Societies* 27, no.1 (2013): 70, doi: 10.1177/0888325412465085.

critical for the establishment's sensitive ear. Klubrádió encountered problems when the Media Authority for dubious and unexplained reasons refused to prolong their frequency. Following massive solidarity protest the channel is still broadcasting its uncensored program but now only on a temporary frequency. Even after several court rulings the issue was still not settled in October 2012.⁹⁷

Fines had to be paid amongst others by the Radio Neo FM in July 2012, which is known to be ideologically close to the Socialist Party MSZP. In a satirical show the presenters made humorous comments about Panda Bears and other threatened species. The Media Council stated that the aggressive language used was inappropriate for hearers below 12 years of age and Neo FM was charged with a fine of 250.000 Ft (870 Euro).⁹⁸

Generally it can be said that until to date, neither of the two media control bodies has exploited its power to the fullest extent and that much worse scenarios were expected. Nevertheless, many journalists report that there is an atmosphere of fear and uncertainty about what is allowed under the new conditions and what is not. As a consequence of this, the public TV-channels suppress reports that are critical of the government and in some cases deliberately distort news reports to harm the opposition.⁹⁹ Demonstrations against the government are often not reported at all or pictures with few people are shown even if thousands actually occupied the streets.¹⁰⁰

A famous case in which the ones in charge had to face some consequences was the

⁹⁷ Gabriella Ballassa, "Ungarn: Widerstand mit der Kamera," *NDR Fernsehen*, January 30, 2013, http://www.ndr.de/fernsehen/sendungen/zapp/medien_politik_wirtschaft/ungarn231.html.

⁹⁸ Rubina Möhring, "Die Luft wird dünn für Ungarns Medien," *Der Standard - Pressefreiheits Watchdog* (blog), July 7, 2012. See also the official statement of the Media Authority: Nemzeti Média és Hírközlési Hatóság Médiatanácsának, "Ügyiratszám: MN/4936-12/2012," <http://mediatanacs.hu/dokumentum/151034/m105720120606.pdf>.

⁹⁹ For a list of cases see: Barbara Thüringer, "Azonnali hatállyal kirúgták Élő Gábort," *index*, December 15, 2011, http://index.hu/kultur/media/2011/12/15/azonnali_hatallyal_kirugtak_elo_gabort_es_papp_danielt/.

¹⁰⁰ Balassa, "Ungarn: Widerstand mit der Kamera".

scandal around a news-report in Magyar TV. A former Chief Judge of the Hungarian Supreme Court Zoltán Lomnici was airbrushed out of a news report on Duna TV. Lomnici supports the Human Rights Organization "Emberi Méltóság Tanácsa" - "Human Dignity Council" and the report was about a press conference that took place to support the cause of the Hungarian Slovaks. The Slovakian government had taken away their Slovakian citizenship after they had applied for citizenship in Hungary. The reasons for brushing Lomnici out, who was only visible in the background, are not clear but, in any case, not objectively justifiable. The manipulation had been discovered and heavily criticized, among others by journalist Balázs Navarro-Nagy. He and some of his colleagues went on a hunger strike to extrajudicial far reaching consequences. The Head of the Newsroom Dániel Papp and Director of the public television news center Gábor Élő were fired.¹⁰¹ Other people who were also involved were not sanctioned.

3. Extra-parliamentary Mobilization

.....I thought the situation is such, that there is a need to get into 'big politics'. Because if my child ones asks me: Daddy, daddy, what did you do when they started demolishing democracy here? And then I can say: this. This is actually my true motivation [all translations are mine].¹⁰²
(Milla2)

.. This was the point where we turned towards a decidedly political direction. If the situation is so brutally abuse ... and makes things so much worse, we then decided to cooperate with the "One Million for the Freedom Press" movement, helping to organize protests, I also gave speeches on several occasions. Last summer we then decided to go a step further and organize a new, social-democratic party.¹⁰³

¹⁰¹ "How The News Gets Edited on Hungarian State Television," *The Contrarian Hungarian* (blog), December 14, 2011, <http://thecontrarianhungarian.wordpress.com/2011/12/14/how-the-news-gets-edited-on-hungarian-state-television/>.

¹⁰² "...azt gondoltam, hogy a helyzet most olyan, hogy be kell szállni a nagy politikába is, mert, mert ha megkérdezi a gyerekeim majd, hogy „Papa, papa mit csináltál akkor, amikor lebontották Magyarországon a demokráciát, akkor azt tudom mondani, hogy ezt. Tehát, hogy igazából ez a motiváció, hogy, hogy, hogy azt tudjam mondani, hogy igen, hogy amikor Magyarországon rosszra fordult a helyzet, akkor én mindent megtettem, amit meg tudtam tenni, hogy ez ne így legyen"

¹⁰³ "... Tehát ez volt az a pont amikor egy ilyen határozottan politikai irányba fordultunk. Tehát hogyha annyira durván vissza él a Fidesz és annyira rosszabb amit csinál mint ami volt.. akkor mi szorosan elkezdtünk együtt dolgozni az Egymillioan a Magyar Sajtószabadságért csoporttal. A tüntetések szervezésében, mondtam több tüntetésen is

(4K!1)

... when I think further about it [why I became an activist], I think it accumulated in many people since 2002, concerning Fidesz, I mean also the things the MSZP did were horrible [...], but Fidesz since 2002 continually, in fact already before, but since 2002 definitely, communicated in such a way that one could already guess what would come out of it and when it finally came true [...], one started to think what could be done about it.¹⁰⁴
(Szoli2)

The protests in Hungary are still going on and evolving. Thus, I can only offer a temporary glance on the movements and how they saw themselves and the overall situation of Hungary in summer 2012. I will first shortly introduce these activist groups, whose members I interviewed. Then, I will analyze their strategies in terms of how transnational they are.

a) One million for the freedom of press in Hungary - Egymillióan a magyar sajtószabadságért (Milla): Milla was founded in December 2010. Two days before Christmas interviewee Milla1 registered a Facebook page called "Egymillióan a magyar sajtószabadságért" (One Million for the Freedom of Press in Hungary). He had hoped that maybe 20.000 people would "like" it on Facebook but actually already after the second day more than 30.000 had signed up. He realized that the freedom of press was an issue that could really bring people together. Before, Milla1 had tried to launch other sites but none of them had been as successful as the Milla page. In March 2013 the page had 104.251 "likes". Even though in the beginning Milla emerged to fight for press freedom its agenda has broadened and now the group understands itself as a general opposition force fighting for a democratic government.

The core basically consists of a loose network with 40 to 60 people who meet on a

beszédet. Viszont tavaly nyáron döntöttük el hogy tovább lépünk egy új soc-dem pártnak a szervezése felé."

¹⁰⁴ "... ha így jobban elgondolom a dolgot, azért ez így gyűlt sokaknál 2002 óta, tehát hogy a Fidesz-szel kapcsolatba, jó, nyilván az MSZP dolgai is szörnyűek [...] de hogy a Fidesz azért 2002 óta folyamatosan, meghát már előtte is, de onnantól kezdve már végképpen, úgy kommunikált hogy azért itt látni lehetett hogy itt mi készülődik, és amikor bekövetkezett [...], akkor azért az ember így nagyon elgondolkodott hogy azért itt mit kellene csinálni."

regular basis. They do not want to establish formal hierarchies. Thus, there are no official leaders of the movement, though there are some whose opinions count more. They gain authority based on their experience and the trust the other members have in them.

However, the interviewees told me that all decisions so far were made based on consensus.

Anyone who participated in at least one meeting can suggest ideas for future actions. If someone brings up an idea, then the group will vote whether it should be realized or not. Milla2 explains that the process of how decisions should be made is still under discussion. For example: Should only those people vote in favor of a project that are actually also willing to put resources into it or everybody who is present at the meeting? They also created a veto-board that consists of seven experienced members. They can technically veto projects that go against the principles of Milla, but so far this was never necessary. Milla clearly wants to distance itself from parties except when they are willing to sign the minimum+ program¹⁰⁵, a twelve point declaration that states what parties and other organizations who want to ensure Milla's support have to believe in. These are (roughly): freedom of press, freedom of religion, transparent party-financing, a fair tax system, equality of opportunity, an independent judiciary, democratic rule of law, transparency in public spending, fair labor laws, a better education system, protection of natural resources and a clear commitment to the values of the European Union. The group is Budapest based, and attracts mainly urban citizens with a higher level of education than the average. Milla2 also mentions that many of the activists have been socialized abroad and are informed about world affairs.

When asked whether they had experienced any direct intimidation measures, the interviewees stated that tax authorities checked on Milla activists, strangely shortly before the protests on March 15, 2012. Moreover several times there were problems with the

¹⁰⁵ The minimum+ program in Hungarian: Tüntetésszervezők, "A támogatás ára - a Milla 12 pontja," March 13, 2012, http://nemtetszikarendszer.blog.hu/2012/03/13/a_tamogatás_ará_a_milla_12_pontja

registration of demonstrations.¹⁰⁶

b) Fourth Republic! - Negyedik Köztársaság mozgalom párt (4K!): 4K! was founded in 2007 as a kind of youth movement. The overall idea was to create "something new", that would be called the "fourth republic" and be a more democratic society. Especially after the political crisis in 2006 the activists were greatly dissatisfied with the MSZP government that was in power back then.

4K! organized several collective events like flashmob pillowfights and other events that aimed at "reclaiming the streets". Beyond these actions, they organized self-study groups and created the blog "fenteslent.blog.hu", which is still working but now separated from the 4K! party.

However, even though they called themselves 4K! from the beginning, according to 4K!2, now president of 4K!, what has happened politically since 2010 and especially the passing of the new constitution significantly changed things. At the time of the interview the party was still in the process of registering, so there were no official members. But according to 4K!1 around 700 people are supporting 4K!.

4K! has some ties to the green party LMP (Lehet más a politika - Politics can be different), which got into parliament in 2010 for the first time. Most notably, they work together on a strategic program called "köztársasági minimum" (republican minimum) which is supposed to define the principles of the "new republic" they want to create. These include: to restore the sovereignty of the people, to restore the principles of legal and social security, and to restore the system of checks and balances.¹⁰⁷

¹⁰⁶ see also several blog posts: Tüntetésszervezők, "Száz évre előre bejelentve," January 19, 2012, http://nemtetszikarendszer.blog.hu/2012/01/19/szaz_evre. Stop, "Az LMP a Milla adóvizsgálatáról: a hatóság bakot lőtt", *stop.hu*, March 1, 2012, <http://www.stop.hu/belfold/az-lmp-a-milla-adovizsgalatrol-a-hatosag-bakot-lott/1006289/>.

¹⁰⁷ see the program on the homepage of LMP: Köztársasági Minimum, "Az Alkotmányosság Helyreállításának Programja," October 21, 2012, <http://lehetmas.hu/hirek/36413/koztarsasagi-minimum/>.

c) Solidarity Movement - Szolidaritás Mozgalom (Szolidaritás): Szolidaritás has strong links with workers unions and the Fegyveres és Rendvédelmi Dolgozók Érdekvédelmi Szövetsége (FRDÉSZ, eng. Union of the Employees of the Armed Forces and the departments of public order) in particular. The founder of the movement Péter Kónya was the president of FRDÉSZ for 13 years and Lieutenant-Colonel in the Hungarian army. In December 2011 he resigned from his position and also wished to leave the army as a conscientious objector. In a public statement he says that, "as a soldier I swore an oath to defend the rights of citizens, but neither as a soldier nor as the defender of interests was I able to prevent that we lost our rights."¹⁰⁸

Szoli1 names the "Bohóc Forradalom" (Clown Revolution) in June 2011 as the actual starting-point for the Szolidaritás movement. When new labor laws were about to be passed, union members asked Orbán to come out and explain to them how they could accept to have their rights curtailed so heavily. Orbán did not take them seriously but replied that they should go to the "minister of clown-affairs". Following this statement the clown-revolution was organized. In these stages the movement clearly had a strong link with unions and labor rights but already in its next protest series the agenda was broadened. During the so-called D-Day protests taking place around October 23, 2011 Szolidaritás announced to be an oppositional organization and presented its flag.

The 15 original founders of Szolidaritás have gradually formalized the structure of the organization. At the time of the interview they were just about to enact the new structures. There would be a decision-making body, consisting of 106 regional leaders. This body would decide upon the yearly budget and long-term strategy but also elect the board of presidents. This has seven members at the moment but the plan is to raise the number to eleven. There

¹⁰⁸ Original German: "Als Soldat habe ich meinen Eid darauf geleistet, die Rechte der Staatsbürger zu verteidigen, aber gleichzeitig konnte ich weder als Soldat noch als Interessenschützer verhindern, dass uns unsere Rechte genommen wurde." Cited in: Rainer Girndt, "Solidarität statt Gehorsam: Ein Offizier will die Demokratie in Ungarn retten," *Pester Lloyd*, December 7, 2011, http://www.pestertloyd.net/2011_49/49konyaszolidaritas/49konyaszolidaritas.html.

have been rumors that Szolidaritás might become a party. In the interviews, however, both respondents claimed that they will not make a party out of the movement itself but maybe a party will be founded alongside it.

In the beginning the majority of followers of Szolidaritás were pensioners who had some connection with either the FRDESZ or other unions. Also, most of them were actually from outside of Budapest. However Szoli1 states that by now there is an equal number of members from the capital. Additionally, since then many young people have joined the movement and there is now youth sub-group "Szolidaritás ifjúság".

The interviewees mentioned that they have the feeling that the government is tapping the phones and listening in on their conversations. One of them also mentioned that one evening a man, whom they believe to be a member of the police, followed them.

3.1 Use of the Internet

A general conclusion of my interviews is that the Hungarian activists are more concerned about their "home-market, than about reaching groups or people abroad. This is indicated by the use of the internet.

The Internet by its very nature is a transnational global communication tool, as far as people have access to it. But are the possibilities of the Internet as a global platform are actually exploited. Szolidaritás and 4K! both have well-maintained websites:

www.negyedikkoztarsasag.hu/ and www.szolidaritas.org/, which are available in Hungarian only. They are rich in content and up-to date. Many important information is shared here, the general aims, up-coming events and contact information. Newspaper articles and TV reports about or representing the organizations are also listed. Articles can be shared or "liked" on Facebook and Twitter. Milla does not have a homepage but launched a type of alternative news website: <http://www.millamedia.hu/>. Partly, activists produce the content

themselves; partly it is re-published from other blogs and newspapers. It is divided into thematic sections like "Hungarian justice", "Beauty", and "Equality". The students association has their own sub-section as well, and one deals only with the far-right politician Zsolt Bayer. All three organizations have a Facebook page. Szolidaritás has also an additional one for Szolidaritás Pest-megye and Milla one from Milla Szeged. Except in the case of Milla which has as an additional English Facebook page, these are in Hungarian only as well.

Likes in February 2013:

Organization	Number of likes	Links
Milla (Hungarian)	104.000	http://www.facebook.com/sajtoszabadsagert?ref=ts&fref=ts
Milla Szeged	251	http://www.facebook.com/milla.szeged?fref=pb
Milla (English)	1.806	http://www.facebook.com/freepresshun
Szolidaritás	11.722	http://www.facebook.com/SZOLIDARITASmozgalom?ref=ts&fref=ts
Szolidaritás Pest-Megye	259	http://www.facebook.com/szolidaritasPEST?ref=ts&fref=ts
4K!	9.227	http://www.facebook.com/NegyedikKoztarsasag?ref=ts&fref=ts

All three use their Facebook sites to post events like demonstration but also share articles, often accompanied by comments on how they interpret them. Milla and Szolidaritás also

distinguish between posts by administrators and user generated content that you access with an additional click¹⁰⁹. 4K!'s Facebook is the least interactive. It not possible to post content as only the administrators can publish on it.

Concerning their online communication strategies the primary target group of all three organizations is clearly made up by people living in Hungary. Milla is the most transnational in its outreach as it has also in English site. English and also some German newspaper articles are shared here and provide the readers with an overview about what Milla is doing and of the general situation in Hungary. However in terms of quantity of the content, it is far behind the Hungarian Facebook page. Looking at the organizations that are "liked" by the Milla page, some international ones are included, for example Amnesty International Hungary, or Transparency International Hungary. On the English Facebook page the "likes" extend to Occupy Wall Street, Al Jazeera English, the Feminist Press at CUNY, europeanrevolution.net and others.

3.2 Base and target group

All three groups are very much Budapest based. If they have an office, all of them have it in the capital and most of their members and supporters are based there. All of them emphasized that they make efforts to reach provincial towns. Szolidaritás seems to be the most successful in this regard. They have organized several round table discussions in provincial towns and according to Szoli1 these events always attracted people from the surrounding area, too.

They emphasize that they would like to broaden their activist base within Hungary and reach places outside of Budapest. Yet, this turned out to be problematic. Lack of

¹⁰⁹ For a detailed analysis of Milla's facebook activities see the MA thesis by Tamás György, "Social network services as tools for online and offline activism: the case of Egymillióan a Magyar Sajtószabadságért (One Million for the Freedom of Press in Hungary)," Master's thesis, Central European University Budapest 2012, accessed September 8, 2012, www.etd.ceu.hu/2012/gyorgy_tamas.pdf.

resources and manpower are only one aspect. 4K!1 points out that a different cultural code exists in villages activated extremely successfully by the right-wing groups. Milla2 also mentions that in the villages, it is more difficult for people to get involved in oppositional activities as everybody knows everybody and most people do not want to offend their neighbors and colleagues and many fear losing their jobs. There is more at stake for them than in the city where one has more opportunities. Moreover, even though Milla would like to broaden its activist base to other areas of Hungary, they state that so far, no solid cells exists outside of the capital, even though there were protests organized in other student cities like Pécs, Debrecen or Szeged. They assume that this is partly because a general lack of know-how about dissident activities exists.

Reaching international groups and audiences comes only as a secondary issue. However, there have been some attempts to establish contacts abroad. Mostly they turned to organizations abroad to organize funds or exchange idea but less so to develop a common agenda or organize a common protest event. Milla2 noted that Milla is sometimes in touch with activists from abroad. He mentioned French, Spanish and American contacts but explained that they do not have the means to implement the ideas they have. He mentioned that they would be interested in receiving practical advice on how to organize certain events and also on network building and strategies to convince more people of their cause. Milla1 answers similarly, that the contacts they have to activists abroad are not formalized. "I would lie if I said we don't have contacts to people from abroad but I would also lie if I say we do."¹¹⁰ However, when asked about most important partner, Amnesty International Hungary and the Hungarian Helsinki Committee are mentioned.

First and foremost all kinds of civil organizations, A Város Mindenkié, the students' network, the teachers' network, the Hungarian Civil Liberties Union,

¹¹⁰ "Hazudnék ha azt mondanám hogy van, viszont hazudnék ha azt mondanám hogy nincs"

the Helsinki Committee, Amnesty International, all those civil organizations that work have some political expertise there are several societal organizations that credibly represent societal groups and problems.¹¹¹

Szolidaritás has an interest in getting in touch with Hungarian minorities abroad in the neighboring countries. Amongst others, they have talked with the Slovakian HÍD party. Szoli¹ also emphasizes the necessity of creating a stronger bond with the Hungarian minorities abroad and relating them to protest movements in the "motherland".

Furthermore he mentions contacts to several diplomatic representatives. He explains that on the one hand they want to give people from abroad a better idea of what is going on in Hungary. They also would like to receive ideational and material support. However, though no actual meeting took place with the Polish Union, there have been some initial contacts.

4K! has made contact to other socialist parties. They are very much interested in the Scandinavian model of a welfare state and trying to learn from them. 4K!¹ states that they have organized a common meeting with the Finnish Social Democratic party. Here, the purpose of the contact has been information exchange.

3.3 Campaigns

All activists groups make symbolic use of the national revolutions of Hungary. The two important dates are October 23, the anniversary of the uprising against Soviet communist rule in 1956 and March 15, the revolt against the Austrian Empire in 1848. Fidesz is of course trying to appropriate these moments of Hungarian history itself. Thus both dates,

¹¹¹ "Hát elsősorban mindenféle civil szervezetek, a Város mindenkié, a hallgatói hálózat, az oktatói hálózat, Társaság a szabadjogokért, a Helsinki bizottság, az Amnesty International, és mindazok a civil szervezetek, akik a, akik szakpolitikákat művelnek, vagy ott vannak különböző társadalmi csoportok környékén és ott hitelesen képesek problémákat, társadalmi csoportokat képviselni."

March 15 and October 23, mark battles between the extra-parliamentary opposition and the government.

Their national revolutions have always been important reference points in Hungarian politics. "Revolutions come and go in Hungary, a country whose population and literary and political elites cherish its revolutionary tradition."¹¹² For Emilia Palonen the revolutions in Hungary mark continuity, even though the term revolution seems to be closer to the idea of rupture. Basically, the system change in 1989 was not experienced as a break with the past, but seen as "in a larger continuum of Hungarian revolutions. They were not a sudden exceptional rupture, but part of a national tradition."

Their importance has varying degrees. Depending on the political circumstances they acquired different meanings and were remembered differently. Zoltán Csipke for example analyzes the changing significance of 1956. He shows that the memory of the revolution shifted. It rose whenever parties saw a chance of using it for their political goals.¹¹³ "Thus, while praising the revolution and positioning one's particular political party on the side of the revolution could be used to underpin one's own democratic values, calling into question a rival's association with 1956 would serve to question their democratic values."¹¹⁴ According to Csipke, 1956 was very important in 1989 during the transition stage. Then it lost some of its significance. However, Fidesz re-discovered it in the mid-1990s when the party started to take a more nationalist turn.

Fidesz had two things to gain from bringing the revolution back into public attention: it would help furnish their conservative credentials as the party grew from the urban-based center-right party of 1998 to a more or less catchall party of the right by 2002; and it would allow them to regularly repeat the claim that

¹¹² Emilia Palonen, "Transition in Hungary: Whistle-Blowing on the Naked Emperor," *Politics & Policy* 40, no.5 (2012), accessed November 15, 2012, doi: 10.1111/j.1747-1346.2012.0038.

¹¹³ Zoltán Csipke, "Changing significance of 1956 Revolution in Post-Communist Hungary," *Europe-Asia Studies*, 63, no.1 (2011): 99-128, accessed January 4, 2012, <http://dx.doi.org/10.1080/09668126.2011.534307>.

¹¹⁴ Csipke, "Changing significance of 1956 Revolution," p. 103.

today's Socialists were yesterday's communists.¹¹⁵

In 2006, after the Gyurcsány scandal and the 50th anniversary of the revolution, the significance of 1956 reached a new peak as the left sought to appropriate the revolution as well. "As opposed to 1996 when the Socialists focused their commemorations around the figure of Imre Nagy, in 2006 the entirety of the revolution was celebrated. Through government sponsored programs which began on October 21, the Socialist-led government attempted to 'out-right the right' in singing the revolution's praise"¹¹⁶

"According to Orbán 1956 remains an eternal guidepost for Hungarians. A mirror 'in which we will always be able to see Hungarians' true face, true value' ". Also on his speech marking the 54th Orbán actually claimed that only now, in 2010, has the revolution of 1956 been completed (politics.hu, 2010). Likewise, March 15 is greatly celebrated by the government. On March 15, 2011 Orbán, in a public speech, emphasized that Hungary was not to become a colony again and drew parallels between the Hapsburg Empire, the Soviets and Brussels.

Between 2010 and 2012 the activist groups organized innumerable smaller events as well as several mass demonstrations. However, though each protest or action also has its own specific theme and target, I think that the umbrella frame the Hungarian activists are using is best described as a 'national revolution for democracy - frame'. While largely drawing on national references, the last concept of the frame, namely democracy, offers possibilities for transnational symbols.

The idea of the 'national revolution' has two interrelated aspects: delegitimizing the current government and presenting the protest as a legitimate, revolutionary act. First of all

¹¹⁵ Csipke, "Changing significance of 1956 Revolution," p. 116.

¹¹⁶ Csipke, "Changing significance of 1956 Revolution," p. 122.

the protests are directed against Victor Orbán and Fidesz. Orbán is often nicknamed "Victátor"¹¹⁷ - "Victator", thus an authoritarian and illegitimate form of ruling. This dictatorship, according to the narrative of the protesters must be abolished through a revolution.

The "Clown Revolution" of Szolidaritás, that according to Szoli1 basically marked the actual beginning of the group, refers to this theme. The clowns ridiculed the government and conducted a mock election, during which people could vote on to revoke the trust they put in the government.



(Figure 3 - Szolidaritás, Mock elections¹¹⁸)

Historical references might be even more important. As mentioned above, in one way or the other the groups draw parallels between themselves and the two crucial revolutions of Hungary. They link these dates with their own effort and emphasize the need for a more

¹¹⁷ see for example this youtube Video recording the protest in front of the Opera where the celebration of the constitution took place on January 2, 2012: "Az Operánál a Viktóra ellen," YouTube video, 2:11, posted by "egyenlitotv," January 3, 2012, http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=qMcRu6_eTNo.

¹¹⁸ Figure 3 - Szolidaritás, Mock elections, available from <http://blog.volgyiattila.hu/2011/06/17/ne-bohockodjunk-forradalommal-plane/>.

English translation of the text: "Retroactively I revoke the trust given to the 2/3 majority of the coalition of Fidesz/KDNP. Options: Yes/Yes."

democratic Hungary and large-scale transformations of the political establishment. A clean cut with the immediate past is also important (not only with Fidesz but also the parties that have been in power before).

Milla, for example, uses a portrait of the poet Sándor Petőfi (1823-1849) as part of their logo. The prominence and importance of Petőfi in Hungary can hardly be overestimated. He was not only a poet, whose poems are still widely studied in Hungarian high schools, but he was also a revolutionary who fought and died in the revolution of 1848.¹¹⁹



(Figure 4 - Facebook Page¹²⁰)

Orbán is thereby portrayed as being an opponent of Petőfi. In the comic below (see Figure 5) Petőfi asks: "How does it feel to be less popular than Gyurcsány?" Orbán answers: "uh, well" Petőfi then: "Thank you for the interview." In the comic Petőfi and Orbán are not only on different sides but Petőfi is also far superior to Orbán. He is called into account by the poet and is obviously not able to give a satisfying answer. The question, "How does it feel to

¹¹⁹ Actually the protest on March 15, 2013 even takes a line of Petőfi's revolutionary poems as its main slogan: Azért a víz az ú - it is the water rules. This is the final line of the poem "Felázadot a tenger ..." - "The whole sea has revolted....". The revolting sea is an allegory on the uprising masses.

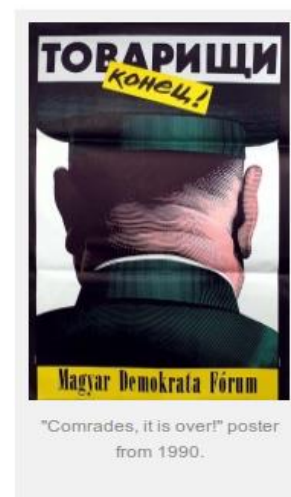
¹²⁰ Figure 4 - Milla Facebook Page, screenshot available from: <http://www.facebook.com/sajtoszabadsagert?ref=ts&fref=ts>.

be less popular than Gyurcsány?" can also be interpreted as: "How does it feel to be even less popular than Gyurcsány?" Thus making clear that also Gyurcsány has a very low popularity as well and is also not wanted.

(Figure 5 - Milla comic¹²¹)



The revolution of 1956 is likewise used to discredit Orbán. On several occasions 4K! and Szolidaritás and Milla draw parallels between Fidesz and the communists that the '56 revolution sought to overthrow. The irony is that Fidesz claims that they are the ones who actually brought an end to communist rule.



(Figure 6 - Posters, "Comrades it is over!"¹²²)

¹²¹ Figure 5 - Milla Comic, screenshot available from: <http://www.facebook.com/sajtoszabadsagert?ref=ts&fref=ts>.

¹²² Figure 6 - Posters, "Comrades, it is over!", available from:

The poster on the right was used by the Hungarian Democratic Forum on the first free elections in 1990 and the left one shows Orbán. Both have the title "Comrades, this is the end".

4K!'s "Moszkvatér campaign" also plays with the parallels between Fidesz and the communists and Fidesz's anti-1956 attitude. The campaign makes references to the renaming of many of Budapest's cities and squares Fidesz put under way. Moszkva tér (Moscow square) was renamed Széll Kálmán tér (Kálmán Széll square) after a famous, liberal politician and Prime Minister of Hungary from 1899-1903. At that time, Orbán tried to strengthen ties with China, hoping for economic aid. He emphasized the strong historical bonds and the mutual friendship between Hungary and China. Activists of 4K! ridiculed Orbán by symbolically renaming Széll Kálmán tér into Peking tér (Peking square). On the right side are portraits of Orbán and the mayor of Budapest Tarlós István. On the left side we see a quote of Mao Tse-tung condemning the 1956 uprisings as a counterrevolution.

(Figure 7 - Péking Tér¹²³)



<http://theco>
december-20

ungary-

¹²³ Figure 7 - Péking Tér, available from: <http://negyedikkoztarsasag.hu/blog/2011/09/06/pekingter>.

Also, 4K! explicitly states on their websites that they see themselves in the tradition of the most important democratic revolutions of Hungary.

We identify ourselves with those endeavors in Hungarian history that fought for the independence, sovereignty, and social justice of Hungary. We thus see as our role models: the national progression in the 19th century, the revolutions of 48, 18, and 56 and the the revolution of the social democrats.¹²⁴

Through these campaigns and also in their speeches and program statements, a sense of patriotism is invoked. Especially 4K! and Szolidaritás emphasize a commitment to the Hungarian nation in their programs taking their distance from right-wing nationalism as promoted by the Jobbik at the same time. The patriotism which 4K! and Szolidaritás are promoting emphasizes the unity of the people living in Hungary without discriminating people because of the ethnicity or religion.

We want a Hungary, where the love of one's country is a value, where the national self-consciousness, the cultivation and preservation of historical and cultural traditions cannot be occupied by one part of the political spectrum, while the other half is excluded.¹²⁵

Milla also uses the cockade on its placards. The cockade is a sign of national pride and was first worn by the revolutionaries of 1848. The torn flag of the 1956 revolution was also used, and in a humorous way mocks the Fidesz government. During the revolution of 1956 people showed a flag with a circular hole in it, because they tore out the red star that was positioned in the middle during communist rule. The protesters replace the red cross with an

¹²⁴ A Negyedik Köztársaság Programja, April 2012, <http://negyedikkoztarsasag.hu/public/data/4k-program.pdf>.

"A magyar történelemből azoknak a törekvéseknek az örökösének tartjuk magunkat, amelyek Magyarország függetlenségéért, lakóinak önrendelkezéséért és a társadalmi igazságosságért küzdöttek. Ezért előképünknek tartjuk a 19. századi nemzeti progressziót, a 48-as, 18-as és 56-os forradalmakat és a szociáldemokrata mozgalmat."

¹²⁵ Website Szolidaritás: http://www.szolidaritas.org/a_mozgalom_celjai/

"Olyan Magyarországot akarunk, ahol érték a hazaszeretet, a nemzeti öntudat, a történelmi - és kulturális hagyományok tisztelete és őrzése, és ezeket a fogalmakat nem sajátíthatja ki magának a politikai paletta egyik fele, míg a másik felét kizárja onnan."

orange, that is the color of the Fidesz party. Moreover the orange fruit has a peculiar history in Hungary. During communism, Hungary made an attempt to cultivate oranges, but as the climate is not suitable it basically failed. The yellowish fruit that was sold as the Hungarian Orange is still used as an satirical comment on Hungarian communism. The irony goes even further considering that Fidesz had chosen its color and the round format of its logo in the 1990s, back then a liberal, anti-communist force, precisely to oppose communism. The protesters also commented Fidesz policies with the slogan "we will drown in orange juice"¹²⁶.



(Figure 8 - Milla Protest¹²⁷)

Another interesting poster, that reveals more about the relationship between the protesters and their use of the past, was used by Milla to advertise the protest on October 23, 2012. The title says: Let us quit with the past. On the stop-sign the word "stop" is written but in Old Hungarian script that probably originated in the 9th century and is also referred to as Szekler Skript. The script is not common anymore. though Jobbik had campaigned for its

¹²⁶ Martin Fejer, "Ungarn 23.10.2011, Budapest – V.Bezirk," *Est&Ost Photography* (blog), accessed October 2012, <http://estost.photoshelter.com/image/I0000yvIa3GvgQZI>.

¹²⁷ Figure 8 - Milla Protests, screenshot available from: <http://www.facebook.com/sajtoszabadsagert?ref=ts&fref=ts>.

usage¹²⁸.

By using it, Milla displays knowledge of Hungarian history but at the same time demands looking forward, and in fact denies the validity of the Old Hungarian script as well. After all, the word written in it is "stop". Only those who are knowledgeable about the script are able to read the sign (though a translation is also provided), thus the message seems to be directed towards them. At the same time the usage of the script also triggers curiosity as the comments next to the picture show. Some people actually did not recognize it and only learned about it through the Milla poster.

Concerning international references there are several allusions to revolutions and dictators from abroad: "Lehetnénk Egyiptom" - "We could be Egypt" for example reads one sign¹²⁹, or the comparison with China in the Moscow Square campaign. Also the D-Day protests organized by Szolidaritás in September allude to transnational events. In his speech Szoli1 explains that they want to evoke the landing of the Normandy of the allied forces in 1944. That day marked the beginning of the end and had brought peace to Europe. The Szolidaritás wants to bring "D like democracy."¹³⁰

Also the concept of democracy offers possibilities to include transnational references. Most importantly, there are regular references to the European Union. In many protests the Hungarian Flag was positioned next to the European flag. There are posters with appeals to the European Union as well, written in different languages.

Szolidaritás on its homepage also published a letter, directly addressing José Manuel

¹²⁸ Jenő Miklay, "Leszavazták a rovásírást nevével," *baon.hu*, October 2, 2011, <http://www.baon.hu/bacs-kiskun/kozelet/leszavaztak-a-rovasirasos-nevtablat-403898>.

¹²⁹ "Éljen a köztársaság," YouTube video, 2:49, video recording of the protest of March 15, 2011, posted by "Rigo=Jancsi", March 15, 2011, <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=PggN0TAelAU>.

¹³⁰ "Kónya Péter beszéd 2011.09.29 D-Day Clark Ádám Tér," YouTube video 5:02, speech of Péter Kónya, posted by "liveemd," September 29, 2011, <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=jyaZkVSBP94>.

Barroso¹³¹. Szolidaritás affirmed that Hungary wants to be part of the European Union and adhere to its principles. Since they feel that the current government is moving further and further away from the EU and is not fulfilling its duties, they call visitors of the site and sympathizers to sign a prepared form, in which they declare once more (after the referendum in 2003) that they want to be part of the European Union. However, though a clear commitment to the European Union is expressed, it is not explicitly mentioned as a role model.¹³²

4. The position of the European Union in Hungary

The stance of the European Union on the developments in Hungary is most important since the EU can be regarded as a potential ally for the activists. It will become clear, however, that although parts of the EU criticism of Hungary are perfectly in line with the criticism voiced by the activists, the European Union is not an uncontroversial ally in Hungary.

4.1 Actions against the Hungarian government

Hungary held the Presidency of the Council of the European Union in the first half of 2011, however the relationship between the Hungarian government and the EU has been tense since Orbán started his reforms. One of the first measures Orbán initiated, and which received massive criticism, was changing the media sector. Neelie Kroes, European Commissioner for Digital Agenda and Vice-president of the European Commission warned Hungary that not changing aspects of the new media laws would have serious consequences. In a leaked letter she especially criticized three points: first, the obligation for balanced

¹³¹ "Felhívás - Levél José Manuel Barrosónak," *Szolidaritás*, January 13, 2012, http://szolidaritass.org/kozlemenyek_felhivasok/felhivas_-_level_jose_manuel_barrosonak/.

¹³² "MILLA Tüntetést 2012 Október 23," YouTube video, 3:14, Milla Protests, posted by "mills média," October 23, 2012, <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=BQc6YWJyzd4>.

broadcast coverage that was supposed to be extended to blogs and on-demand services; second, far reaching control of broadcasts from outside Hungary; and third "the requirement to register all media, including press, Internet sites and non-private blogs, with the National Media and Communication Authority (all of whose members were in effect chosen by the ruling Fidesz party)."¹³³ The Hungarian government reacted to this criticism and made amendments accordingly. The EU did not ask for any further changes but made clear that Hungary's handling of the media was to be watched closely. Others argued that the changes did not go far enough especially concerning the power of the Media Authority.¹³⁴

Three other policy changes were also massively criticized and could not be easily solved. The EU expressed worries about the Data Protection Agency, the independence of the National Bank and the judiciary reforms. In December 2011 the Hungarian government had applied for a new international credit line. The IMF and the EU, who were to decide about it declined this request and used Hungary's financial need to pressure the government to change its policies. The main concern was about the independence of the National bank, where government officials were allowed to participate in its Monetary Policy Council. In March 2012 the pressure became even greater as the Finance Ministers of the European Union declared to suspend half a billion Euros from the EU's cohesion fund that Hungary was supposed to receive in 2013. According to them, Hungary had not done enough to diminish its public deficit.¹³⁵

In May, the Hungarian parliament passed new laws reacting to these criticisms and to

¹³³ "A Fidesz Retreat," *The Economist*, January 27, 2011, http://www.economist.com/blogs/easternapproaches/2011/01/hungarys_media_law.

¹³⁴ Europe Press Release, "Media: Commission Vice-President Kroes welcomes amendments to Hungarian Media Law," *MEMO/11/8*, Brussels, February 16, 2011, http://europa.eu/rapid/press-release_MEMO-11-89_en.htm.

¹³⁵ "Hungary is given incentive to pursue more responsible fiscal policy," *eu2012.dk* (official website of the Danish Presidency of the European Council 2012), March 14, 2012, <http://eu2012.dk/en/NewsList/Marts/Uge-11/post-ecofin>.

appease the EU, which led to new negotiations that have been going on since then.¹³⁶

Though satisfied with the National Bank Law, the EU nevertheless sued Hungary because the independence of its Data Protection Agency and its judiciary system were still not ensured. Hungary had created a new National Agency for Data protection. From January 1, 2012 onwards it took over the tasks that had previously been under the responsibility of the data protection commissioner's office. The old commissioner who came into office in 2008 was actually supposed to keep his position until 2014 but with the creation of the new agency he was replaced. In April 2012 the EU filed a suit against Hungary as the premature dismissal of the data protection commissioner was seen as interfering with the independence of that office.

Initially, the new regulation also allowed the Prime Minister and the President the possibility to displace the supervisors any time. Due to EU warnings this provision was already changed in March 2012, but did not lead to a satisfactory result.

Concerning the judiciary, another innovation against which the EU filed a suit in April 2012, was the reduction of the pension age of judges, from 70 to 62 years (65 years from 2014). This forced many judges into retirement and, it is feared, will be likely replaced by those who are more inclined towards Fidesz.¹³⁷ In July 2012 the Hungarian Constitutional Court sentenced the government to change the regulation, but Fidesz seemed not willing to comply with the ruling. In September they suggested an alternative draft law, raising the retirement age to 65 but then decided not to pass the law. In November the European Court

¹³⁶ AFP, "Ungarn ändert Zentralbank-Gesetz," *Handelsblatt Online*, May 25, 2012, <http://www.handelsblatt.com/politik/international/nach-druck-von-eu-und-iwf-ungarn-aendert-zentralbank-gesetz/6687334.html>.

¹³⁷ European Commission Press Release, "Hungary - infringements: European Commission satisfied with changes to central bank statute, but refers Hungary to the Court of Justice on the independence of the data protection authority and measures affecting the judiciary," *Reference: IP/12/395*, April 25, 2012, http://europa.eu/rapid/press-release_IP-12-395_en.htm.

of Justice ruled that to reduce the judges' retirement age was illegal.¹³⁸

Related to that is the criticism of the extremely powerful position of the head of the National Judicial Office expressed, among others, by the Venice Commission¹³⁹ and pointedly summarized by *The Economist*:

[N]o other country has a system as centralized as Hungary's, says the commission. The head of the authority can pick judges, including replacements for those just forced into retirement, and has a nine-year mandate. It does not help that Tünde Handó, the incumbent, is the wife of a prominent MEP from the ruling right-wing Fidesz party.¹⁴⁰

The recommendations of the Venice Commission certainly helped to bring about the changes in Hungarian law, but their suggestions actually go much further than what the EU in the end was able to obtain.

4.2 Fidesz anti-EU Rhetoric

Mobilization efforts do not take place in a vacuum but are embedded in a larger societal matrix. All actors are in constant competition.¹⁴¹ Thus now I want to analyze the discursive field concerning the European Union. In the first place Fidesz' ideas about Hungarian culture and history are being institutionalized by the party. Secondly, the European Union is a very important reference point for Hungary in the sense that Victor Orbán is portraying himself as defender of the nation against European colonizers.

It has to be noted that the Central and Eastern European states have profoundly

¹³⁸ European Commission Press Release, "Court of Justice rules Hungarian forced early retirement of judges incompatible with EU law," *Reference: MEMO/12/832*, November 6, 2011, http://europa.eu/rapid/press-release_MEMO-12-832_en.htm http://europa.eu/rapid/press-release_MEMO-12-832_en.htm.

¹³⁹ see the Opinion of the Venice Commission: European Commission for Democracy through Law (Venice Commission), "Opinion on Act CLXII of 2011 on the Legal Status and Remuneration of Judges and Act CLXI of 2011 on the Organisation and Administration of Courts of Hungary," Opinion no. 663/2012, adopted by the Venice Commission in Venice March 16-17, accessed August 3, 2012 <http://www.venice.coe.int/webforms/documents/CDL-AD%282012%29001-e.aspx>.

¹⁴⁰ "Salami tactics," *The Economist*, March 24, 2012, <http://www.economist.com/node/21551100>.

¹⁴¹ Dough McAdam, Sidney Tarrow and Charles Tilly, *Dynamics of Contention* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2001) 49.

different experiences with the EU than Western European countries. They had to fight for accession but still in many ways were disadvantaged compared to the wealthier regions.¹⁴² Moreover, rather than actively being part of creating the EU, accession countries were expected to comply with already established norms.

The scope of EU conditionality is far larger for the East European countries than for their Mediterranean predecessors. This set of "great expectations" that the EU has of the candidate countries regarding their conformity to its laws, regulations, and norms has preempted much of the public debate over the nature of policy in the region.¹⁴³

In general it can be said that the Hungarian public has an ambiguous, seemingly contradictory relationship with the European Union. As the Eurobarometer of 2011 shows, in general the trust in the European Institutions is high in Hungary. 54% percent of the persons asked, answered that they would trust them. At the same time only 35% of the people stated that they have a positive image of the European Union. Moreover, though the Hungarians seem to trust the institutions of the EU more than the national ones, only 50% of the Hungarians consider themselves as EU citizens. "Rather, for them [Brussels has] the role of an anchor point or a rich uncle who is expected to offer hopes for salvation."¹⁴⁴

According to Jürgen Dieringer and Ákos Tóth, the Hungarian self-image is dominated by two concepts. The idea that Hungary is part of the Western civilization and thus a quasi-natural member of the European Union and on the other hand a strong emphasis on the

¹⁴² Nicole Galliana, "Political Elites in Eastern Central Europe: Paving the Way for 'Negative Europeanisation?'," *Contemporary European Studies* 2, (2007): 82, accessed December 4, 2012, http://nicolegalliana.com/docstexts/04_text_political_elite_2007_ng.pdf.

¹⁴³ Anna Grzymala-Busse and Abby Innes, "Great Expectations: The EU and Domestic Political Competition in East Central Europe," *East European Politics and Societies* 17, no.1 (2003): 64, doi: 10.1177/0888325402239684.

¹⁴⁴ Jürgen Dieringer and Ákos Tóth, "Die Europapolitik Ungarns: Historischer Hintergrund und aktuelle Befindlichkeiten," *Osteuropa* 61, no.12 (2011): 187.

German original: "[Brüssel hat] für sie eher die Rolle eines Ankerpunktes oder eines reichen Onkels, an den man Heilserwartungen richtet."

nation. "In Hungary Europe as a liberal project is always connected to the idea of a Europe of the nations."¹⁴⁵ The strong concept of the nation was not overcome when it came to EU accession in 2004. Rather it paved the way for new types of nationalisms, not only in Hungary but in other post-communist countries as well. "Contrary to both spirit and letter of the EU, accession opened a backdoor for East Europe's unreconstructed nationalists to pursue their nationalist ambitions."¹⁴⁶

Whereas the leftist parties took an openly progressive, pro-EU and pro-liberalization course, the right-wing and conservative parties emphasized the nation that needed to be protected. None of the parties was against the accession to the EU but they had diverging opinions about the relationship between the EU and the national level.¹⁴⁷

Rightist public discourse, the language of national self-centeredness, bases itself on the decisive role of will to carry out the 'unavoidable' change of unjust relations, and claims a nation-based state redistribution, new regime change, and moral revival. The underlying conviction is that the nation is not emulative, but self-sufficient, having its own values, its past, and its character, and that its historical merits entitle it to make others adjust to it instead of adjusting to others.¹⁴⁸

Fidesz started as a youth organization in the 1980s fighting against communist rule and for democratic values, and in the 1990s moved to the right and very successfully portrayed itself as the party of the nation. "The new and improved Fidesz regarded re-branded itself as the party of the Hungarian nation. Whether in government or in opposition Fidesz publicly

¹⁴⁵ Jürgen Dieringer and Ákos Tóth, "Die Europapolitik Ungarns: Historischer Hintergrund und aktuelle Befindlichkeiten", *Osteuropa* 61, no.12 (2011):185-186.

German original: "Europa als liberales Projekt ist in Ungarn immer gepaart mit der Idee des Europas der Nationen."

¹⁴⁶ Jon E. Fox, and Peter Vermeersch, "Backdoor Nationalism," *European Journal of Sociology* 51, no.2 (2010): 325, doi: <http://dx.doi.org/10.1017/S0003975610000159>.

¹⁴⁷ Iván Zoltán Dénes, "Adopting the European Model versus National Egoism: the Task of Surpassing Political Hysteria", *European Review* 20, no.4 (2012): 518, doi: 10.1017/S1062798712000087.

¹⁴⁸ Dénes, "Adopting the European Model," 517.

claimed to represent the nation's interests."¹⁴⁹

The defensive rhetoric is also employed when talking about the European Union. The EU is be watched carefully as it works together closely with foreign capital and instead of respecting Hungary's sovereignty tries to "colonize" it.

[It] is disturbing for the Hungarian public that every fifty or sixty years we have to believe in something different: either in Vienna, sometimes in Moscow, then in the Comecon, then in the European Union, then in the NATO. This distorts public opinion and undermines politics, makes it a gentlemen's ploy, and the people lose their trust in public civic life. This is why we have to make clear that we are not controlled by interests that lie outside of the Hungarian nation but only represent the interests of the nation.¹⁵⁰

Krisztina Koenen points out that Orbán is using very combative rhetoric, although often diluting the fierceness of his claims with a statement that nevertheless the existing alliances cannot be revoked. However she argues that only one part of the statement can be true: either one commits to the international community or not.¹⁵¹

Do we accept to be at others mercy to death, or do we rely on those virtues that make the Hungarians Hungarian, the sovereignty sovereign, and the history historical. Do we choose the fate of a colony or do we chose a Hungarian life that is equipped and build to accommodate our best self.¹⁵²

"Nem leszünk gyarmat" - "We won't become a colony" this slogan was also used by Fidesz

¹⁴⁹ Fox and Vermeersch, "Backdoor Nationalism," 330.

¹⁵⁰ Viktor Orbán, "Magyarország ki tud állni magáért és polgáraiért", (speech given in front of the parliament), April 4, 2011, http://www.miniszterelnok.hu/beszed/magyarorszag_ki_tud_allni_magaert_es_polgaraiert.

Hungarian original: "[A]zért az zavarja a magyar közvéleményt, hogy ötven vagy negyven évente mindig másban kell hinni: hol Bécsben, hol Moszkvában, hol a KGST-ben, hol az Európai Unióban, hol a NATO-ban, és ez egy idő után aláássa a politikát, úri huncutságnak mutatja, és elveszítik az emberek a közéletbe vetett bizalmukat. Ezért nagyon fontos, hogy világossá tegyük az ő számukra, hogy bennünket nem a magyar nemzet fölötti szempontok vezetnek, hanem a magyar nemzet érdekei vezetnek, amiket össze akarunk hangolni más nemzetek érdekeivel és szempontjaival."

¹⁵¹ Krisztina Koenen, K, "Feinde, überall Feinde: die Welt, wie sie Viktor Orbán sieht," *Osteuropa* 61, 12 (2011): 110. See also: Peter Bognár, "Orbán: Wir lassen uns zu keiner Kolonie degradieren," *Budapester Zeitung*, March 16, 2012, <http://www.budapester.hu/2012/03/orban-%E2%80%99Wir-lassen-uns-zu-keiner-kolonie-degradieren/>.

¹⁵² Viktor Orbán, "Nem leszünk gyarmat," (speech given by Orbán on March 15, 2012), March 15, 2012, http://www.miniszterelnok.hu/beszed/nem_leszunk_gyarmat.

"Elfogadjuk-e a szemből tartó kiszolgáltatottságot, avagy azokra az erényekre támaszkodunk, amelyek a magyart magyarrá teszik, a szuverenitást szuverenitássá és a történelmet történelemmé. Gyarmati sorsot vagy a legjobb énként szerint felépített és berendezett magyar életet választjuk-e."

supporters, who organized the so called "Békemenet" - "Peace March": a pro-government rally in January 2012. András Bencsik, one of the main promoters of the march makes clear that they feel patronized by the European Union and have the feeling that a coalition of Western countries wants to bring Orbán down. "We want to be left alone". He seemed to have touched a chord as around 100. 000¹⁵³ people attended the demonstration.

4.2 Activist Discussion

Within this political context the activist groups have to situate themselves. They have, of course, several possibilities to react to EU-criticism and they do not have to follow such mainstream discourses. They can creatively work to redefine and even directly challenge their meaning, and indeed responses vary. Still, they cannot ignore the overall discursive field.

The interview with Aron Buzogány shows how the entry into the European Union affected non-state actors in Central and Eastern Europe. Though in the beginning they were optimistic about the "Return to Europe", activists soon became more cautious. "Increasingly, images of Europe included those critical of the over-bureaucratized and inefficient European administrative structure or issues threatening national identities of the new member states, where the EU was depicted as an aggressive intruder or colonizer."¹⁵⁴

This tendency is even more present now. Activists are aware of the situation and have to make strategic choices how they position themselves towards the European Union and international actors in general. The fact that the European Union is facing a lot of criticism

¹⁵³ Estimates say between 100. 000 and 400. 000 people attended the demonstration. ALB, "Just another ordinary week for Orbán," *The Economist*, March 15, 2012, <http://www.economist.com/blogs/easternapproaches/2012/03/hungarys-embattled-government>.

¹⁵⁴ Áron Buzogány, "Stairway to Heaven or Highway to Hell? Ambivalent Europeanization and Civil Society in Central and Eastern Europe," *Protest beyond borders: Contentious Politics in Europe since 1945*, ed. Hara Kouki and Eduardo Romanos Fraile (Oxford/New York: Berghan Books, 2011), 78. pp. 69-85.

from several groups all over the continent concerning its management of the financial crisis might also not contribute to establishing a positive image of the EU in Hungary. Not all the interviewees expressed concerns about their position towards the European Union and international contacts. But for others it was an important issue.

Western contacts can be quite ruinous in this political situation when Fidesz is pushing such a strong rhetoric against the EU [...] and the propaganda of the enemy it can be used very much against us.¹⁵⁵
(4K!1)

When asked about whether 4K! is trying to build alliances with Western groups he further elaborates:

Unfortunately in Hungarian domestic politics this kuruc-tradition¹⁵⁶ is very strong [...] that we always fight against the West for our independence. Also Orbán is using these rhetorics against the EU now. It would not be good if the democratic opposition would be pushed to play the role of the Labanc^{157,158}

He also explains that according to him, the idea of letting Daniel Cohn-Bendit speak at one of the Milla rallies was actually "tragic". As he was already a controversial figure, not only among conservative and right-leaning people, it was particularly easy to exploit the topic.¹⁵⁹

Interestingly, Marco Schwarz from the German section of the Union of the European Federalists (EUD) tells a similar story. The EUD planned a demonstration for more democracy and freedom in Hungary in front of the Hungarian embassy in Berlin. Based on its

¹⁵⁵ "Nyugati kapcsolatok már elég vészesek tudnak lenni egy ilyen politikai helyzetben, amikor a Fidesz ilyen erős EU ellenes retorikával tolja a dolgokat [...] a nyugatti kapcsolatokat nem is érdemes felépíteni mert azt az nagyon így vissza lehet ütni ilyen propagandába."

¹⁵⁶ The Kuruc fought against the Austrian Empire between 1671 and 1711.

¹⁵⁷ The enemies of the Kuruc were the Labanc, the Austrians and their supporters.

¹⁵⁸ "Sajnos a magyar belpolitikában nagyon erős ez a kuruc hagyomány [...] hogy nyugatiak ellen harcolunk a függetlenségünkért. az Orbán most ezt a retorikát használja az Európai Unió ellen is. É akkor abban az nem lenne jó hogy ha most belehetne tolni a demokratikus ellenzéket a Labancoknak a szerepébe."

¹⁵⁹ See for example the article in the right-wing newspaper Magyar Demokrata: "Vigyázat, provokáció!", *Magyar Demokrata*, March 14, 2012, http://www.demokrata.hu/cikk/vigyazat_provokacio/; <http://hetivalasz.hu/vilag/pedofil-e-daniel-cohn-bendit-36795/>.

understanding as European Federalism, the group believed that the Hungarian situation concerned not only Hungarians but all the citizens of the European Union. They regarded it not so much as an internal Hungarian affair but as an inner-European problem. During the preparation of the protest event the EUD tried to contact several of the Hungarian-German organizations to join the protest. Schwarz explained that they had expected them to participate but instead met with massive criticism and did not get anybody to side with them, although in principal, they agreed with the cause of EUD. Basically they said it would be detrimental for the cause of Hungarian democracy to create the impression that "outsiders" wanted to get involved in domestic matters, thus indirectly strengthening conservative and right-wing forces.

This example, however, also shows that, the influence of such misgivings about a counterproductive rebound of protests from abroad is not necessarily that big or has no immediate effects. After all, the protest in Berlin still took place, though without the Hungarians, and about 150 people attended it. On the other hand, the warnings of the German-Hungarian communities do not seem completely unfounded, as even though it was only a minor demonstration in Berlin, Hungarian foreign Minister János Martonyi reacted to it. He insisted on an article in the journal of the EUD in which he explained his position, saying that although Hungary might have to implement some adjustment to her policies, but that Hungary in any case respected European values and was ready to communicate with the European community.¹⁶⁰

Hungarian protest groups do, in any case, use European symbols and references, as we have seen in analyzing their campaigns. Szoli¹ explains how one of their actions directly aims at affirming Hungary's connection and commitment to the European Union.

¹⁶⁰ János Martonyi, "United in Democracy: offener Brief von Dr. János Martonyi, Außenminister von Ungarn", *Europa Aktiv* 2 (2012), accessed February 20, 2013, <http://www.europa-union.de/publikationen/verbandszeitschrift/archiv/2012/>.

For example we collected signatures to send them to [José Manuel] Barroso that stated that even though the government's politics is following an anti-EU course and rhetorics, the Hungarian citizens would still like to stay members of the EU. And within one and a half or two weeks we gathered more than one hundred thousand signatures from all over the country and brought them to Barroso to Brussels.¹⁶¹
(Szoli1)

Activists in Budapest mention another reason for transnationalization to be difficult. This was already hinted at, although from a slightly different point of view, in an analysis of the Occupy movement in Budapest. Agnes Gagyi shows that the Occupy Movement could not be successful in Hungary because of certain characteristics that Occupy Wall Street internalized. Although presenting themselves as a global movement for everybody, or maybe even because of this, regional differences and peculiarities are ignored. Moreover, its seemingly universalist stance, at a closer look, proves to be very much rooted in the tradition of Western '68 protesters and thus privileges certain discourses over others. Gagyi points out that the *soixante-huitards* "favored the illusion of social flying, or the defiance of social positions and their gravitational pull. This lies at the heart of the movement's self-understanding."¹⁶² At the same time this makes the Occupy Movement unresponsive to the Eastern European context to which it cannot adjust. The activists recognize the problem of relating to a Western style of politics and establishing claims as well.

...everything that is not right-wing in Hungary, since the transition automatically tries to absorb everything coming from the West. The alter-globalization movement worked in that way and simply copy-pasted things [...] it did not try to adapt them but just copied them and then was suprised that things did not work here in the same way. Gyurcsány likewise copied the Tony Blair and Schröder type of third-way politics [...] but obviously, this did not work in this

¹⁶¹ "...Például volt ilyen, amikor aláírásokat gyűjtöttünk azért, hogy Barroso elnök úrnak elküldtük azt, hogy miközben a kormány politikája az EU elleni politikát és ezt a retorikát folytatja, aközben a magyar állampolgárok szeretnének maradni az EU tagjai. És gyakorlatilag másfél hét vagy két hét alatt több mint százezer aláírást gyűjtöttünk össze országszerte, amit kivittünk oda és átadtuk Barroso elnök úrnak Brüsszelben"

¹⁶² Agnes Gagyi. "Occupy Wall Street? Position-Blindness in the New Leftist Revolution," *Journal of Critical Globalisation Studies* 5 (2012): 144, accessed January 12, 2013, http://www.criticalglobalisation.com/issue5/143_148_POSITION_BLINDNESS_JCGS5.pdf.

half-industrialized society. The former liberal party SZDSZ also forced this.¹⁶³
(4K!1)

He further explains that for the left, this is of special importance as they have to find alternative visions for Hungary that are more sensitive to the local conditions.

For the left this is important, as today we have a generation living in Hungary that experienced socialism [...], and after socialism a very brutal form of capitalism, that was also different [...]. And this is why we have to figure models, and a language that is understood by those living here in Eastern Europe.¹⁶⁴
(4K!1)

Gagyí further comments on this. "Unable to feed back on local conditions, alter-globalism remained the imaginary movement of a small activist elite, while the anti-globalist anger of the population got channeled by the extreme right."¹⁶⁵ But other activists have a different opinion. Milla activist Milla2 sees the deficiencies on the Hungarian side and not on that of the exclusionary discourse of the West. Rather, he implies that more of Western and supposedly global thinking should enter the Hungarian discourse.

Public discourses in Hungary are of low quality concerning different questions. Whereas in the world questions discussed are about how the unity of the European Union will look like, what is the future of the economic community, does it make sense to think about a federalist plan, where is global capitalism heading, global inequality, the inequality within Western states, the immigrant question [...], these discourses do not exist in Hungary. And this is because Hungarian domestic politics are about bullshit.¹⁶⁶

¹⁶³ "...tehát minden ami nem jobboldal Magyarországon az így nagyon a rendszerváltás óta, megpróbálnak mondani csak úgy automatikusan átven nyugatról. Tehát ugyanígy működött az anti-globalizációs mozgalom, az egyszerűen copy-pasztelte [...] nem adaptálni próbálta igazán, hanem csak így átmásolni és akkor csodálkozott, hogy így nem működik úgy a dolog. A Gyurcsány ugyanígy másolta át ezt a Schröder meg Tony Blair harmadik utas féle politikát [...] de hát hogy ez itt nem működött egy ilyen fél-ipari gazdaságban. A volt liberális párt az SZDSZ pont abszolút ezt tolta [...]"

¹⁶⁴ "A baloldali szempontjából azért olyan fontos ez, mert itt most olyan generációk élnek, akik a szocialista rendszert megtapasztalták [...] és a szocializmus után meg megtapasztaltak egy nagyon durva vad kapitalizmust, ami szintén más [...] És emiatt kell olyan mintákat meg olyan dolgokat kitalálni, meg egy olyan nyelvet kitalálni, amit azok itt értenek akik itt élnek kelet Európában."

¹⁶⁵ Gagyí, "Occupy Wall Street?", 148.

¹⁶⁶ "Hát nagyon az a baj, hogy a magyar diszkurzus nagyon rossz minőségű diszkurzus a nyilvánosságban a különböző kérdéseket illetően. Tehát amíg az, amíg a világban tényleg az a kérdés, hogy az Európai Unió egység az hogyan marad fenn, hogy milyen a jövője a gazdasági egységnek, van-e egy föderalista forgatókönyvnek lényege, hogy hová tart a globális kapitalista rendszer a globális egyenlőtlenség, a nyugati társadalmon belüli egyenlőtlenségek a bevándorlásnak a helyzete [...] Ezek a diszkurzusok Magyarországon nincsenek és azért nincsenek meg egés"

(Milla2)

Milla2 basically agrees that Western style discourses are not appropriate for Hungary at the moment but still portrays them as desirable. Gagyí actually refers to Milla directly, criticizing them for their Western-oriented style, ignoring local context and thereby leaving the field to the right-wing forces.

In Hungary, a civil movement against current right-wing government, called Milla, that brought more than 80,000 people to the street on 23 October 2011, made mention of OWS [Occupy Wall Street], and mutual declarations of solidarity were issued [...]. Ironically, though, many of the movement's organisers come from a network of liberal intellectuals who never spoke up against the neoliberalisation of socialist infrastructures after 1989, and who occupied key positions all through those years while the bulk of 'grassroots civil activity' was undertaken by right-wing movements.¹⁶⁷

A final conclusion or agreement on the issue has not been reached yet, but it is obvious that Hungarian activists find themselves in a delicate situation. In principle, they support values that are upheld by the European Union and other international institutions and groups as well. The EU, in any case, is a powerful actor with the ability to really keep the Fidesz government in check. But the protest movements have to be careful not to lose their base and be responsive to the specific historical, national and economic context of Hungary and the region. Hungary's bad experiences in the past lead to the insight that the Western model might not be solution for their own problems. Nevertheless, taking an isolated position also seems no sustainable option.

egyszerűen a magyar belpolitikát az kreténiségekről szól."

¹⁶⁷ Gagyí, "Occupy Wall Street?," 146.

Conclusion

The mobilization efforts in Hungary as we have seen largely remain within the national domain though some contacts and references to areas outside of Hungary exist. Concerning restricting factors of transnationalization, the literature has far less systematic explanations to offer than factors enabling mobilization. This is similar to the tendency of social movement studies to concentrate on successful mobilization attempts and neglect those movements that never managed to attract large numbers of people and also reasons for demobilization.¹⁶⁸ However, one can infer restricting factors from the aforementioned theories. They implicitly suggest that when entrepreneurial activists are missing, the local government is responsive to the activists' demands, a cosmopolitan attitude is not present and if the region is not integrated into inter- and supranational structures, transnationalization of movements is not likely.

However, these factors are not really valid for the Hungarian context. They do have entrepreneurial activists, are integrated into a larger international structure and at the same have to deal with a very unresponsive government. Rather it seems that to explain why the transnationalization of the Hungarian protests is limited, one has to look at the domestic situation: the nationalist rhetoric, the difficult position of the EU and also the difficulty of connecting to international leftist discourse for post-communist countries.

Thus, I think it is the discursive opportunities within the Hungarian societal sphere and the way activists shape and react to them that are most important for the analysis of transnationalization processes or their absence. The mainstream discourse in Hungary, as I have shown through the analysis of the art and media world, Fidesz policies and its anti-EU rhetoric, is highly nationalistic. Concerning the activist's position to this mainstream discourse we have seen that, though not radically departing from it, they still have a

¹⁶⁸ Koopmans, *Framing Contention*, 22.

different view on Hungarian democracy, nationalism and a more welcoming attitude towards the European Union than the Fidesz government.

A study analyzing the speeches of the Milla demonstration and the official state celebration on March 15, 2012 came to a similar conclusion, namely that the value systems forwarded during the respective events were basically incompatible. It is thus clear that the activists though using imaginary of culturally resonant frames, creatively try to work out new meanings and alternative values.

"The less hierarchical network of Milla is coupled with a varicoloured picture of the nation, where diversity is a value. The list of speakers - mostly groups with low capacity of lobbying - as the Roma or students - is strengthening this picture. In state speeches Hungarians seems to be a homogenous group. The nation appears as an autonomous entity, with its interests, feelings and characteristics."¹⁶⁹

Moreover, also the evolutionary approach as developed by Koopmans is useful for explaining the transnationalizing tendencies of movements as well. As in many regions the opportunities and threats rooted in the international arena are quite recent, it might be that activists need more time to experiment and learn how to exploit these possibilities and use them for their own ends. As it seems, Hungary is an excellent example for these difficulties.

¹⁶⁹ Márton Gerő, Anna Légmán and Pál Susánszky, "Roots of affective politics: differences in reference points used by social movements and political actors," (paper presented at the XXVI Convegno SISP, Rome, Italy, September 13-15, 2012) accessed December 6, 2012, http://www.socio.mta.hu/gero_marton___legman_anna___susanszky_pal___roots_of_affective_politics_differences_in_reference_points_used_by_social_movements_and_political_actors/.

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Anna Ilin

Zola Str. 1
10178 Berlin

e-mail: annailin@hotmail.de

Geburtsdatum: 17.07.1985
Geburtsort: Bremen



Akademische Ausbildung

10/2010 – vs1. 07/2013	M.A. Global Studies - a European Perspective Erasmus Mundus Programm Teilstipendium	Leipzig Neu-Delhi Wien
	1. Semester – Universität Leipzig 2. Semester – Universität Leipzig 3. Semester – Jawaharlal Nehru University, Neu-Delhi seit dem 4. Semester – Universität Wien	
09/2007 – 09/2010	Arts&Culture Bachelor, Universität Maastricht	Maastricht

Journalistische Erfahrungen

- seit April 2013 freie Mitarbeiterin in der Gesundheitsredaktion des *Tagesspiegel*
- Dezember 2012 – Februar 2013 Praktikum bei *Deutsche Welle TV* Berlin, Kulturredaktion
 - eigenständige erstellen von sechs Kurzbeiträgen (etwa 60 Sekunden Länge) für die Sendung Kultur21
 - eigenständiges recherchieren und verfassen von Online Artikeln
 - Drehbegleitung
 - Recherchearbeiten
- April bis Juni 2012 Hospitanz im *ARD Auslandsstudio Wien*
 - Recherchearbeit unter anderem: Landkauf-Debatte in Ungarn, Das Wiener Kaffee-Institut, Wildpark in Kroatien
 - Vorbereitung von TV-Drehs und eigenständiges führen von Interviews unter anderem mit Buchautor Miklós Vajda über die politische Situation in Ungarn
 - Erstellung eines eigenen Beitrag: Portrait des Brückenmeisters der Kettenbrücke
- März 2011 Praktikum bei der *TAZ Nord* in Bremen
 - eigene Artikel recherchieren und verfassen

- "Heute in Bremen"-Interviews führen

 - Oktober 2010 - Dezember 2011 freie Mitarbeit bei *Radio Mephisto 97.6 Leipzig*
 - eigene Beiträge recherchieren, schreiben, aufnehmen und ein-sprechen
 - Nachrichtenredaktion
 - Teilnahme an verschiedenen journalistischen Workshops (z.B. zu den Themen: Nachrichten schreiben, recherchieren, Reportagen produzieren)

 - September 2010, Praktikum beim Regionalsender *center.tv Bremen*
 - Kamera (z.B. Frage des Tages, Kurznachrichten)
 - Schnitt
 - Redaktion (Nachrichten, 3-Minuten-Beiträge)
-

Sprachkenntnisse

- **Deutsch:** Muttersprache
- **Ungarisch:** Muttersprache
- **Englisch:** sehr gut in Wort und Schrift
- **Französisch:** Fortgeschritten
- **Niederländisch:** Grundkenntnisse

Anna Ilin

Berlin, den 19. Juni, 2013